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# THE HOMILIST.

EDITED BY

DAVID THOMAS, D.D.,

OF LONDON,

AND

URIJAH REES THOMAS,

OF BRISTOL.

VOL. VI., EXCELSIOR SERIES,

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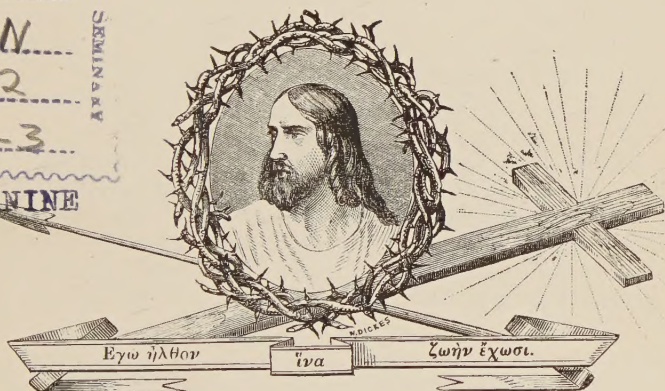
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SEMINARY

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"THE LETTER KILLETH, BUT THE SPIRIT GIVETH LIFE."—*Paul.*

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# P R E F A C E.



THE MISSION OF "THE HOMILIST" IS NOT TO SUPPLY SERMONS FOR INDOLENT OR INCOMPETENT PREACHERS, BUT STIMULUS AND TONIC FOR THE TRUE-HEARTED, HARD-WORKING, AND GENUINE TEACHER. IT DOES NOT DEAL IN THE "READY-MADE," BUT IN THE RAW MATERIAL. IT ONLY ADMITS CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE MOST CONDENSED AND SUGGESTIVE CHARACTER. IT REQUIRES THINGS, NOT WORDS—HEALTHY SAPLINGS, JUST RISING INTO SIGHT AND STRUGGLING INTO SHAPE, NOT LIFELESS TIMBER, HOWEVER EXQUISITELY CARVED OR BRILLIANTLY POLISHED. THE FORMER MAY GROW, THE LATTER MUST ROT. IT PREFERS ONE LIFE-GERM TO A CARTLOAD OF MANUFACTURED SERMONS. IT DOES NOT TREAT SACRED TEXTS AS PEGS ON WHICH TO HANG ARTISTIC DISCOURSES, BUT AS SEED-CORN TO BE CULTIVATED FOR HUNGRY SOULS. "THE HOMILIST," IN ONE WORD, PROCEEDS UPON THE PRINCIPLE THAT THAT AUTHOR SERVES HIS READER BEST, NOT WHO GIVES, BUT WHO SUGGESTS THE MOST THOUGHT, AND THUS BRINGS OUT FROM THE READER'S OWN SOUL THOUGHTS AND THOUGHT-PRODUCING POWERS OF WHICH BEFORE HE WAS UTTERLY UNCONSCIOUS.

Although "THE HOMILIST" has passed through *six* Serial forms, numbering in all *forty-nine* volumes, of which about ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY THOUSAND have been sold, another Series has been called for, and that by clergymen of all denominations, not only in this country and the colonies, but throughout Europe and America. The larger portion of the volumes that have appeared are out of print, and but few remain unsold, still the circulation continues as ever.

This is the *SIXTH* volume of the *Excelsior* Series; and as the same keynote rules this as ruled the melodies of the forty-eight previous volumes, we may fairly dispense with a formal Preface, and only state that, as ever, it aims to be free from pedantic learning, rhetorical verbiage, theological polemics, and denominational narrowness.

It says with Horace,—

"I'll play the whetstone; useless and unfit  
Myself to cut, I'll sharpen others' wit."

DAVID THOMAS.

*Erewyn, Upper Tulse Hill,  
London.*



# IMPORTANT.

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*The next volume, which appears in June, will be the FIFTIETH volume from commencement, and will, in all probability, be the last. About three-fourths of all the articles in the volumes of "THE HOMILIST" have been from the commencement by the Editor, and he feels that he has done enough for one man in this direction.*

*Although the influence of "THE HOMILIST" has in no measure decreased, nor has the ability of the Editor diminished, "Change of work is rest," and he may spend the residue of his time in a fresh field of literature. He will, in a future number, give a sketch of "THE HOMILIST" from the beginning, and indicate his work for the future. Meanwhile, he would urge those who desire to procure complete sets of "THE HOMILIST" to do so as soon as possible, as the demand in all probability will be great.*

*This series—the "EXCESIOR" Series—will consist, when complete, of Seven Volumes, and it would be well if those who intend possessing it, to send their names to the Editor immediately.*

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## *Leading Homily.*

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### THE CARNALITY OF CHURCHISMS.

“FOR WHILE ONE SAITH, I AM OF PAUL, AND ANOTHER I AM OF APOLLOS, ARE YE NOT CARNAL?” 1 *Cor.* iii. 4.

**I**N the Church at Corinth there was a variety of elements of thought and feeling. The Roman element was there, and this element was democratic. Indeed the city as it stood in the days of Paul had been built by Julius Cæsar some fifty years before this letter was written, and was undoubtedly populated, to a considerable extent, by freedmen. The tendency in this class of mind would be independency in thought and action. The Greek element was there, the Greek mind was cultured, philosophic, and aesthetic; in teaching, it would crave for the speculative in thought, and the rhetorical in expression. The Jewish element was there, and the craving of the Jewish mind in religion was for marvels, signs, and wonders. In consequence of this variety of mind in the Corinthian Church, there would naturally be much diversity of thought, and



discussions which would lead to divisions. "*The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness.*" The Jews lived in signs and the Greeks deified wisdom. The members of the Corinthian Church, therefore, at this time instead of being thoroughly united in soul one with another, by having Christ as the supreme subject of thought, and supreme object of love, were divided by certain forms of religious thought and types of religious teaching. No two men, however enlightened and honest, will have exactly the same views on the same subject, or present those views in identical aspects. Paul would not give out exactly the same views in exactly the same way as Apollos did, or as Peter did, or either of them as the other, and their auditors would therefore have their preferences. Herein we have the philosophy of the existence of various Churches and sects. The text suggests to us the *nature* and the *carnality* of Churchism.

I. THE NATURE of Churchism. What is it? Those in the Corinthian Church who said, "*I am of Paul,*" "*I am of Apollos,*" and "*I am of Peter,*" had such an exaggerated estimate of, and excessive and vaunting devotion to, the opinions and preaching of their particular favourites, as led them to ignore and even depreciate the merits of the others. To the Paulites there was no teacher equal to him, no Gospel equal to his—so with the Peterites, and so with the admirers of Apollos. The worth of one man's opinions and ministry was magnified to the ignorement and devaluing of those of others. This I call *Churchism*. To become members of institutions called Churches, to adopt and advocate the

peculiar views they represent, may be right enough, and peradventure useful. To meet together in a community of those with whose ideas, sympathies, and aims, we have the most in common, is both proper and salutary. It affords opportunities for mutual counselling and spiritual stimulation, to elevating thoughts and sacred devotions. But when that communion becomes the centre and circumference of our souls it is Churchism or sectarianism. What are Churches? The best Churches that exist in Christendom to-day are but the organisation of certain human opinions concerning Christ and His Gospel. Man's theories of the Gospel are no more the Gospel than physiological theories are life. Calvin had his views—he propounded them, many endorsed and adopted them. Luther had his views—he set them forth before the eyes of men and enforced them, they were accepted by multitudes and organised into Churches. Wesley had his views—which he advocated with saintly zeal, numbers adopted them, and they were organised into Churches. Edward Irving had his apocalypses, and his dreams were organised into Churches.

And thus we have Roman Catholic Churches, Greek Churches, Episcopal Churches, Presbyterian Churches, Wesleyan Churches, Morisonian Churches, Unitarian Churches, Congregational Churches, and Baptist Churches. What are they all? Nothing more, I trow, than various human opinions of the Gospel embodied in institutions. And though the human opinions and theories thus organised are varied, contradictory, and never absolutely true, they nevertheless attract to them men of various types of religious thought and forms of religious feeling, so that on all hands we hear each devotee of his Church extolling its pre-eminent merits.

One says, "I am of the Catholic Church," another "I am of the Greek Church," another "I am of the Church of England," another "I am a Congregationalist," another "I am a Wesleyan," or a Baptist, and so on indefinitely.\* Paul says to these Corinthians, "*Who then, is Paul, and who is Apollos?*" And I say, What, then, are those Churches? Are they the exponents of the "*truth as it is in Jesus?*" No. Are they the mirrors of His self-sacrificing, world-embracing love? No, they are only the shrines and the organs of human opinions—nothing more. If oracles, they are human, not divine. There is one true Church, and only one, and that Church is composed of those only who have a vital and a practical faith in Christ *Himself* as the living, loving Son of God, and the Redeemer of mankind, faith in Him, I say, and not mere belief in what men think or say about Him. The Christ of human creeds is not the Christ of the Gospel. The theological, the ethical, and the spiritual difference is overwhelmingly saddening. What is the theology of these Churches to Christ? What is the rose in the laboratory of the chemist to the rose in the garden, bathed in the dew of a summer's morning? What are those little muddy pools on the grassy marsh hard by the shore compared to the mighty ocean that rolls around them? What are astronomical tractates compared to the sidereal universe? Because human opinions at their best are so crude, so narrow, and so fallible, I would not have them stereotyped, still less would I have them organised for men to glory in. "*I determined,*" says Paul, "*to know nothing amongst men save Jesus Christ*

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\* See "The Religions of the World." Published by Charles Griffin & Co.



and Him crucified." Away with Churchism, and let Christism take its place. "I left the Church," says Stopford Brooke, "not to be less, but more of a Christian." The text suggests:—

II. The DEPRAVITY of Churchism. "*Are ye not carnal?*" The word carnal, σαρκικός, means "fleshly." Paul uses this word to express depravity; hence, elsewhere, he speaks of the mind of the flesh as contrary to the mind of the spirit, as at enmity against God, and as leading to spiritual death. "*If ye live after the flesh, ye must die.*" "Among the writers and philosophers of St. Paul's age, there was a well-known division of the whole nature of man into the flesh, the soul, and the spirit: the flesh was the bodily nature, with all the desires and tendencies that rise out of it; the soul was the common understanding, the judgment, the æsthetical, and the logical faculties applied to the various subjects with which mere sense and intellect are conversant; the spirit was transcendental, that portion of man's nature properly divine, it had an inward intuition of God. The spirit was the voice and prompting of God within us. It could have no connection with evil, and nothing evil could proceed from it: but by the predominance of the senses and of the lower powers of the soul, its activity could be depressed, or altogether suspended." Now this flesh, this bodily part of man's being, possesses desires and tendencies, and appetites, which our corrupt imaginations nurture to inordinate power, and inspire with sinful propensities. Hence to this Paul seems to trace nearly all immoral conduct, for he says, "*For whereas there is among you envyings, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?*" Hence he speaks, too, of being "*vainly puffed up by his*

*fleshly mind.*" The apostle here implies that he who devotes himself to Churchism or to a religious party, walks as a "carnal man," that is, he is depraved.

First : Is not the man "*carnal*" who allows his mind to be engrossed in the *human* rather than in the *divine* ? The walk of the spiritual man is a walk with God, he sees and walks with Him Who is invisible. God fills the horizon of his soul, not as a huge opaque rock, concealing all other objects, but rather as a crystal mountain, mirroring all things in the heavens above and the earth beneath. "*God is in all his thoughts.*" On the other hand, the "*carnal*" man lives in the human, never rises above the cloudy and insalubrious atmosphere of human opinions. This is Churchism—souls living in human thoughts, and exulting in them. Ah me, how some men are chained to their little churches or sects ! With them it is all "our Church," "our body," "our principles." Instead of climbing up the breezy heights of divine ideas, they live down in sectarian glens, breathing the fog of human crotchets, aye, and sad to say, vaunting them, and with souls half suffocated sometimes exclaim, "I am a Churchman," "I am a Nonconformist," &c.

Secondly : Is not the man "*carnal*" who allows his mind to be engrossed in the *selfish* rather than in the *benevolent* ? It is a characteristic of the spiritual man that he lives not to himself or for himself, but to God and for others, self is a subordinate, not a supreme, object. On the contrary, the "*carnal*" man lives to himself, self is the object of his supreme interest and aim. His grand question is, "*What shall I eat, what shall I drink, wherewithal shall I be clothed ?*" "*What shall I do to be saved*"—and to be happy ? Churchism

is intense selfishness, it cuts the soul away from all but the members of its own little community. How to escape the wrath of God—how to avoid the quenchless flames of hell, how to reach the transporting delights of Paradise—these are the absorbing questions in nearly all co-called Churches. Selfishness goes to the market in quest of the uncertain riches of earth, but goes to the Church with a far more ravenous and vicious craving, viz., to attain an “*inheritance undefiled, incorruptible, and that fadeth not away.*” As a rule, what interest does a strict Churchite or sectary take in the welfare of any community but his own? On the contrary, there is often such a spirit of envy and jealousy exhibited as would rejoice in the extinction of all who differ in Church doctrine or policy. “If,” says a modern writer, “among painters of the human face and form there should spring up a sect of the eyes, and another sect of the nose, a sect of the hand, and a sect of the foot, and all of them should agree, but in the one thing, of forgetting that there was a living spirit behind the features more important than them all, they would too much resemble the schools and cliques of Christians, for the spirit of Christ is the great essential truth, doctrines are but the features of the face, and ordinances but the hands and feet.”

Thirdly: Is not the man “*carnal*” who allows his mind to be engrossed in the *transitory* rather than the *permanent*? The spiritual man labours not supremely for the bread which perishes, nor seeks to “*lay up treasures on earth, where moth and rust corrupt,*” but is ever more in quest of eternal life or eternal goodness. His affections are set on the real, not the phenomenal, upon the changeless, not on the mutable. Not so the

“*carnal*” man, he is ever in pursuit of the temporary—temporary pleasures, temporary possessions, temporary honours. Now Churchism lives in the temporary. All human thoughts organised into churches are subject to constant change and decay. “Our little systems have their day, they have their day and pass away.” In most churches you will find that many of the dogmas to which the founders attached importance, and once held with prominence, are long since extinct. In the credenda of churches there is a slow, silent, resistless revolution deleting dogmas engrossed in trust deeds, and printed in ecclesiastical formularies. Human thoughts, even the best of them, are only as the “*grass that withereth*,” and the “*flower that fadeth away*.” God’s thoughts alone endure, the “*word of the Lord shall stand for ever*.”

CONCLUSION :—In denouncing Churchism as an evil, I am far enough from implying that religious communions are in themselves wrong or pernicious. On the contrary, I judge otherwise. Union with those of kindred thoughts, sympathies, and aims, is natural and mayhap beneficent. Nor do I imply that the theologies and creeds on which Churches are organised, because they are human, are to be despised and neglected. The honest thoughts of enlightened, devout, and able men on spiritual realities, though untrue to eternal fact, demand and will repay respectful attention. The thoughts of other men awaken thoughts in us, and often the thoughts that are the most manifestly erroneous strike with the most suggestive force upon our own mind. Nor do I imply that it is in any way unbecoming in us to feel a greater interest in some types of religious thought, in some styles of religious ministry than in others. This, indeed, we could



not prevent: the mental laws of our nature bind us to it. But the evil against which I utter my protest is, such an overrating of our own Church peculiarities, as to render us not only indifferent but often hostile to the excellencies of other communions. This is *Churchism*, or sectarianism, and this I denounce. Its adherents and abettors are "*carnal and walk as men.*" What difference in Spirit and method is there between the religious, sectary, and the "carnal" man, the man of the world? Both are selfish and mercenary. The one trades in the temple and makes gain of godliness, the other in the market, and extracts pelf out of other things. The former, I verily believe, is the most venal and pernicious. In sooth, worldiness in what are now called Churches has become so ravenous and regnant that it loads our post office with begging circulars, disturbs our domestic regions with gambling bazaars, and weighs down the religious sentiment by the beseechments of Churchhirelings. He who knows most of the religious world will be the most ready to endorse the fact that religious sectarianism is one of the most depraved things on earth. Churchism is bigotry, and bigotry is one of the chief devils in Christendom. Daniel O'Connell has, in his grand and powerful way, described this devil as a female monster. "She has no head and cannot think, no heart and cannot feel. When she moves it is in wrath, when she pauses it is amidst ruin, her prayers are curses, her God is a demon, her communion is death, her vengeance is eternity, her decalogue is written in the blood of her victims, and if she stops for a moment in her infernal flight, it is upon a kindred rock, to whet her vulture fang for a more sanguinary desolation."

# *The Preacher's Homiletical Commentary.*

## HOMILETIC SKETCHES ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

OUR PURPOSE.—Many learned and devout men have gone *Philologically* through this *TEHELIM*, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough HOMILETIC treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

OUR METHOD.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1) THE HISTORY of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2) ANNOTATIONS of the passages. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase or allusion that may occur.—(3) The ARGUMENT of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4) The HOMILETICS of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts and indicate such sermonizing methods as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

No. CLIX.

### The Highest Service and the Highest Being.

“PRAISE YE THE LORD,” &c.—Ps. cxiii. 1-9.

HISTORY:—In the Episcopal Church, for a reason which is not very clear, this Psalm is appointed to be read at the service on Easter Day. The six Psalms (cxiii.-cxviii.) were called by the Jews the “Hallel,” and were sung at the three great feasts—at the Feast of Dedication, and at the new moons. At the Passover the two first

Psalms (cxiii. and cxiv.) were sung in the early part of the meal, the remainder (cxv.-cxviii.) after the filling of the fourth cup of wine. These last are supposed to have been the hymns sung by Christ and His apostles after the last supper, before they went out to Gethsemane (Matt. xxvi. 30; Mark xiv. 26). *Prebendary Young.*

ANNOTATIONS:—Ver. 1.—“*Praise ye the Lord, Praise, O ye servants of the Lord, praise the name of the Lord.*” “Hallelujah! Praise, O ye servants of Jehovah, praise the name of Jehovah! As the title, *Servant of Jehovah*, is applied to eminent leaders of the chosen people (Ps. xviii. 1; xxxvi. 1; xc. 6; cv. 6), so the plural, *Servants of Jehovah*, designates His chosen people. See Ps. xxxiv. 23 (22); lxix. 37 (36) and Ps. cxxxvi. 22; and compare Ezra v. 11; Neh. i. 10, from which last place it appears, that this was a familiar form of speech with the returned exiles.”—*Alexander.*

Ver. 2, 3. “*Blessed be the name of the Lord.*” This means His nature and character. “*From this time forth and for evermore. From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the Lord’s name is to be praised.*” This means He is to be praised through all time and through all space.

Ver. 4-6. “*The Lord is high above all nations and His glory above the heavens. Who is like unto the Lord our God who delivereth on high, who humbleth Himself to behold the things that are in heaven and*

*in the earth!*” “*Above the heavens*” or in and over the heavens. The nations of the earth are numerous, but He is high above them all. The heavens are high, immeasurably high, but He is above them. “The heavens are His throne,” &c. (Deut. iii. 24).

Ver. 7. “*He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill.*” “*Dust*” and “*dunghill*,”—degraded social states, terms borrowed from the prayer of Hannah (1 Sam. ii. 8.)

Ver. 8. “*That he may set him with princes, even with the princes of His people.*” Not merely to sit with His people, but with the princes of His people. “Not only,” says Canon Cook, “as equal with the princes of the earth, but with the princes of His people, the chosen of God.”

Ver. 9. “*He maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the Lord.*” A “house,” to the Hebrew mind, implies children, without which it is cheerless, without children the wife has no secure place. This verse is taken by some to be the point of the Psalm, and the

occasion of its composition.—  
*Canon Cook.* This was  
 exemplified in the case of  
 Sarah, Rachel, Hannah,  
 Rebekah, &c.

ARGUMENT :—This Psalm is a

song of praise. The first  
 three verses celebrate the  
*name* of the Lord, the second  
 His *exaltation*, and the third  
 His *condescension*.

HOMILETICS :—The whole Psalm directs our attention to the highest service in which intelligent creatures can engage, and the highest Being intelligent creatures can contemplate. Our attention is directed to—

I. THE HIGHEST SERVICE in which intelligent creatures CAN ENGAGE. What is the highest service? Praise. "*Praise ye the Lord.*" What is praise? Not verbal laudation, however enthusiastic in feeling, appropriate in language, or transporting in music. Thoughtless religionists attach this idea to it. Hence in giving out hymns in public, they say "Let us praise God." And hence, too, books are composed called "books of praise." What, then, is it to praise God? It is to have our whole souls, and being, attuned to His holy character, and to His benevolent purpose. A holy life is the only true anthem. Now this is the *highest* service. Why? First, Because its *inspiration can alone give worth to all other services*. There are numerous departments of activity in which men have to engage, but the duties of none can be rightly discharged without the true spirit of true praise. Secondly, Because it alone can *harmoniously develop and satisfy all the faculties and aspirations of our nature*. Therefore, there is this earnest and repeated call to "*praise the Lord.*" It is (1) A service for all men. "*Praise, O ye servants of the Lord.*" (2) A service for all time. "*From this time forth and for evermore.*" (3) A service for all space. "*From the*



*rising of the sun unto the going down of the same."* There are services confined to certain classes, certain times, certain places. But not so with the service of praise. Our attention is directed to—

II. The HIGHEST BEING which intelligent creatures can CONTEMPLATE. Who is He? He is here called "*The Lord our God.*" The eternal *Jahve*. There are four subjects of thought here in relation to Him. First: His character. "*The name of the Lord.*" Human names do not represent human characters. More frequently, perhaps, if they have a meaning at all, they misrepresent the real character of the owner. But God's name means His character, all that He is, the All-wise, All-holy, All-merciful, &c., &c. Secondly: His incomparableness. "*He is high above all nations, and His glory above the heavens.*" To whom will ye compare Him? What are all the hierarchies of heaven to Him? Less than a spark to the central fires of the universe. What is the whole creation to Him? What are motes floating in the sunbeam to all the massive globes that roll through immensity? How great is He? "There is nothing great but God"—so exclaimed an eloquent French preacher over the coffin of his sovereign. Thirdly: His condescension. "*Who humbleth Himself to behold the things that are in heaven and in the earth.*" This language is, of course, an accommodation to our way of estimating great and small. To the Infinite One there is nothing high or low, nothing great or small, nothing new or old. But we have the feeling, and it is an instinctive one, therefore not to be ignored or disparaged, that for Him to notice us is an act of infinite condescension.

“Lord of Ages, what are we,  
What are all the worlds to Thee?”

Fourthly : His operation. Observe His operation (1) Abroad in society. “*He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill, that he may set him with princes.*” This is often done in the secular history of men. How often, even in this country, do we see men rising from the realms of pauperism and obscurity to those of wealth and position. This is constantly going on in the *spiritual* history of men. Spiritually all men are poor, blind, miserable and naked, and God by His Gospel raises them, and sets them amongst the moral nobles of His universe. Observe His operation (2) At home in families. “*He maketh the barren woman to keep house,*” &c. He operates in families as well as abroad and in society. To Him the birth of every child must be ascribed.

CONCLUSION : In closing our observations the following passages from the works of Dr. Chalmers will not be inappropriate. They were made in reply to certain remarks of infidels, ridiculing the idea of God noticing individual men—remarks founded on the discovery of the telescope, revealing an immeasurable universe of worlds and systems. “About the time of the invention of telescopes,” says the Doctor, “another instrument was formed which laid open a scene no less wonderful, and rewarded the inquisitive spirit of man with a discovery which serves to neutralise the whole of the argument. This was the microscope. The one led me to see a system in every star : the other leads me to see a world in every atom. The one taught me that this mighty globe, with the whole burden of its people,

and of its countries, is but a grain of sand on the high field of immensity. The other teaches me that every grain of sand may harbour within it the tribes and the families of a busy population. The one told me of the insignificance of the world I tread on, the other redeems it from all its insignificance ; for it tells me that in the leaves of every forest, and in the flowers of every garden, and in the waters of every rivulet there are worlds teeming with life, and numberless as are the glories of the firmament. By the one there is the discovery that no magnitude, however vast, is beyond the grasp of the Divinity ; but by the other we have also discovered that no minuteness, however shrunk from the notice of the human eye, is beneath the condescension of His regard."

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THE TRIALS AND TRAITS OF PIETY.—"Many have I persecuted of mine enemies," &c. Psalm cxix. 157-160. These verses bring under our notice two subjects : I. THE TRIALS of PIETY. They are twofold—*objective* and *subjective*. (1) *Objective*.—Many are my persecutors and enemies. Persecution has ever been, and still is, the lot of the godly. "In the world ye shall have tribulation," &c. The seed of the serpent is always darting its venomous sting into the sensibilities of the seed of the woman. (2) The *subjective*. "I beheld," &c. Transgressors here points especially to apostates from divine truth. In sooth all sin is moral apostasy, and all sin strikes sorrow into the heart of the pious. What greater pain can there be to a loyal and loving son than to see his father insulted, &c? No man who has genuine piety—that is, who loves the Great Father *supremely*—can fail to experience the most poignant grief when he sees his contemporaries on all hands acting in malignant hostility to the *Great One*. Notice II. THE TRAITS of PIETY.—(1) *Steadfast adherence to truth*. "Yet I declined not from Thy testimonies." Whatever happens hold fast to truth. (2) *Loving devotion to rectitude*. "Consider how I love Thy precepts." It is characteristic of a godly man that he delights in the law of God. (3) *Devout craving for a higher life*. "Quicken me," &c. "I count not myself to have attained," &c. Excelsior! is the watchword of the Christly soul. (4) *A settled consciousness of the truth of God*. "Thy word is true," or, "Thy word is truth, and every one of Thy righteous judgments endureth for ever." That is the sum total, and each unit of the sum of God's commandments is truth and perfection. "He that hath received his testimony hath set his seal that God is true."

## HOMILETIC GLANCES AT THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN.

[As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form of Sermonic Outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are:—"Introduction to New Testament," by Bleek; "Commentary on John," by Tholuck; "Commentary on John," by Hengstenberg; "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," by Westcott; "The Gospel History," by Ebrard; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon; "St. John's Gospel," by Oosterzee; "Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Dörner, Lange, Sears, Farrer, etc., etc.]

No. CXXIV.

### True Moral Glory.

"I HAVE GLORIFIED THEE ON THE EARTH; I HAVE FINISHED THE WORK WHICH THOU GAVEST ME TO DO. AND NOW, O FATHER, GLORIFY THOU ME, WITH THINE OWN SELF, WITH THE GLORY WHICH I HAD WITH THEE BEFORE THE WORLD WAS. . . AND THE GLORY WHICH THOU GAVEST ME I HAVE GIVEN THEM; THAT THEY MAY BE ONE, EVEN AS WE ARE ONE." *John* xvii. 4, 5, 22.

EXPOSITION:—Ver. 4. "*I have glorified Thee on the earth, I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do.*" Or, "I glorified Thee on the earth, having accomplished the work." Observe: (1) Christ came into the world to accomplish a certain Divine work. This is true of every man, every man has a Divine mission. (2) This Divine work He had now finished. He had fulfilled His Divine

mission, this is what every man ought to do. (3) Having finished the work, He glorified God, and ceased His earthly life. God is glorified in the execution of His will, and when that is done, so far as that will relates to earth, our connection with earth terminates. It was so now with Christ. Though He had not at this time left the earth, and would not for upwards of forty days, yet He speaks of



Himself as having actually departed. His work on the earth had *finished*, and He regarded His connection with the earth as over. If a man could do all that God intended him to do on the earth, however long he continued on the earth after, the earth would become heaven to him.

Ver. 5. "*And now, O Father, glorify Thou me.*" As I have finished my work on earth, and thus glorified Thee, I ask Thee, O Father, to glorify me. "*With the glory which I had with Thee before the world was.*" We are far enough from saying that Christ had not an eternal existence, but the words do not convey that idea. They only convey the idea of a pre-existence. He might have existed before all time, before

the creation, and yet not from eternity. (See chap. i. 18; Phil. ii. 4, 9). One expositor says, "That there can be no explanation of verses 1 to 5 of this chapter, which denies that Christ claims for Himself that He was Divine and co-eternal with the Father." Though we disclaim Unitarian views on this point, honesty compels us to say that there can be such an explanation. The words do not necessarily convey the idea of co-eternity with the Father.

Ver. 22. "*And the glory which Thou gavest me I have given them,*" &c. Here, again, the future is regarded by Christ as present. What is the glory? Ideal goodness, moral excellence, that which is as we shall see, the glory of God.

HOMILETICS :—We have brought verse twenty-two in connection with the fourth and fifth verses, because it has to do with the same grand subject, viz., the glory of God, or *true moral glory*. Glory implies the manifestation of something that is adorable. There are manifestations of the adorable where the adorable does not exist. Worldly pomp, glitter, and pageantry, the thoughtless render homage to these manifestations, as if there was something really intrinsically adorable behind them. Whereas, if the thing behind the vanity, the selfishness, the superstition, and the ignorance were

truly seen, men would recoil from the manifestation with disgust. Now, what is the really adorable thing, the thing which, if manifested, would excite honour and reverence and praise? It is moral excellence. This is the glory of God. When Moses besought God to show him His glory, what was the reply? Was it, I will show thee the Almightyness of My power, the infinity of My wisdom, the immensity of My dominion, the boundlessness of My wealth? No. Men cannot from their souls *adore* these things. But He said, "I will cause all My goodness to pass before thee." *God's glory is His goodness*, His infinite moral perfection. Hence the passage suggests two things in relation to true glory—

I. IT IS THE SAME IN ALL MORAL BEINGS WHEREVER IT EXISTS. We are taught here that, First: In *God* it is the manifestation of moral excellence. "*I have glorified Thee on the earth.*" Take from the Infinite His disinterested love, His absolute purity, His inflexible rectitude, and though you leave Him in possession of His Omnipotence, His Omniscience, and His Almightyness, you have stripped Him of all that moral souls can really adore. We are taught here that, Secondly: In *Christ* it is the manifestation of moral excellence. "*And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was.*" (1) Christ had it as the eternal *logos*. He was the word, the *logos* that was with God in the beginning. He was, so to say, the organ through which the absolute and unknowable One revealed Himself in the creation of worlds. "By Him were all things made, and without Him was not any thing made that was made." This was the glory He had with the Father in the beginning, the glory of creating innumerable worlds

and systems, and myriads of existences to manifest Him who “dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see.” (2) Christ seeks it now as the *incarnate logos*. “And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was.” He would now ascend to the same power and influence that He had before. He “humbled Himself and became obedient unto death.” He would have His nature now raised into the full effulgence of eternal excellence. That glory had been, to a great extent, under a cloud during the days of His flesh; the cloud was about breaking, and He yearned for the original refulgence. We are taught here that—

Thirdly: In *man* it is the manifestation of moral excellence. “And the glory which Thou gavest Me, I have given them.” Man is glorious only as he realises, embodies, and manifests the eternal *ideal of excellence*.

True glory, then, wherever it exists, is the same, the same in God, the same in Christ, the same in humanity; there is no other glory worth the name. To be glorious is to be good, and to be good is to be like God. The passage suggests in relation to true glory that—

II. WHEREVER IT EXISTS ON EARTH IT COMES THROUGH CHRIST FROM GOD. “And the glory which Thou gavest Me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one.” How does it come through Him? First: He *reveals* it to men. “We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” He revealed the moral perfections of the Eternal, not only in His teaching, but in the whole of His life. He was not only the incarnate *logos*, *reason*, but the *eternal life*—goodness. In Him was “life, and the

life was the light of men." He was the express image of the invisible God. All the elements of spiritual excellence were in Him livingly, harmoniously, and constantly. Never did spiritual excellence appear before men in such a radiant and regnant manner. Sages had reasoned about it, poets had sung about it, but it was all in haze and weakness. Secondly: He *inspires* it in men. He implants its germ in the human soul, or, rather, He kindles its flame. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

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THE GROWTH OF SPIRITUAL LIFE.—"And he said, So is the kingdom of God," &c. (Mark iv. 26-29). Observe: I. Spiritual goodness is a GROWTH. It springs and grows up. Cut the stone and carve it, so it remains; cut the tree, lop off its branches, and then it will sprout. Man can impart motion and make automata; but not life. The test of real life is growth. II. Spiritual goodness is an INDEPENDENT growth. It grows of itself, it needs no petting, it is not a hot-house plant. Religion is not for the cloister. Ministers need not torment themselves about the issue of the work, God gives the increase. III. Spiritual goodness is a MYSTERIOUS growth. "He knoweth not how." The law of development is hidden, though real. It is marvellous when and where we get our Christian knowledge, not systematically, but here and there. There are Christians who are anxious to see growth. IV. Spiritual goodness is a CONSTANT growth. "Rising night and day." Go and stand in a field by night, men are asleep, but growth and motion are in that field. Our souls do not rest, hearts beat out their life-pulses while asleep. V. Spiritual goodness is a PROGRESSIVE growth. "Blade, ear, full corn in the ear." The "blade" is the mark of tenderness, the "ear" is the mark of full vigour, the "full corn in the ear," the mark of maturity —Abstracted from a sermon of Rev. F. W. Robertson.



## Sermonic Saplings.

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### STEPHEN AND SAUL.

“AND WHEN THE BLOOD OF THY MARTYR STEPHEN WAS SHED, I ALSO WAS STANDING BY, AND CONSENTING TO HIS DEATH, AND KEPT THE RAIMENT OF THEM THAT SLEW HIM.”—*Acts* xxii. 20.

**H**ASTE to the rescue !” cried the messengers from the Temple, as, almost breathless, they ran to the captain of the military band. “Haste to the rescue ! For a lonely man is being sadly maltreated just outside the Temple, and all Jerusalem is in an uproar.” The captain, with commendable promptitude, took soldiers and hastened to where Paul was ; and, when the people saw the soldiers coming they left off beating the apostle, and his life was saved. The captain, thinking him to be some base fellow, had him bound with two chains, demanded who he was, and what he had done. Then ensued a perfect Babel ; some crying one thing, and some another ; and the captain, failing to ascertain the cause of the tumult, commanded Paul to be conveyed to the castle, where, upon arriving, he had to be borne up the stairs by the soldiers to escape the violence of the people. The apostle obtained permission to address the infuriated mob, and, beckoning with his hand to arrest attention, in the most respectful and remarkable language, delivered a speech in his own defence. He related how in a trance he was commissioned to proceed to Jerusalem, and bear testimony for the Lord Jesus. He felt both afraid and ashamed

to go, remembering how he had persecuted the followers of Jesus; and, the image of the sainted martyr Stephen flitting before his mind, he confessed to the diabolical part he had taken in the death of that holy man. "And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting to his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him." The Lord made known to him that his former badness was no disqualification for future usefulness, and that he was chosen to become the apostle to the Gentiles. In the vivid picture presented in my text, we see—

I. HOW SPLENDID ABILITIES MAY BE WRONGLY DIRECTED IN HUMAN LIFE. Saul, of Tarsus, was endowed with good natural abilities, and he had in addition, the advantage of a thorough education. These things opened the way for promotion to positions of influence, and honour. Let us notice (*a*) *His intense conscientiousness*. He did not persecute the followers of Jesus in wicked spite or sport, but because he felt he was doing right, and discharging his duty towards the God of his fathers. We learn from this that conscience may mislead, and needs to be corrected and enlightened, or it may become perverted and lead men astray. What *seems* to be right, is not always so, and conscience may misdirect. (*β*) *His intense religiousness*. Earnest and enthusiastic in the Jewish religion, he could claim blamelessness in the observance of the Mosaic law, and adherence to the Levitical economy. Devout religiousness may be wrongly directed, and may degenerate into exclusive bigotry and mischievous fanaticism. (*γ*) *His intense earnestness*. The red-hot passion of his fervent nature gave force and fire to thought and action; and, in persecuting the Christians, he

became exceeding mad, and breathed out threatenings, like an infuriated tiger, against them. So, in divine things, energy may be wrongly directed, and the fervour of the soul may run into an unholy channel. The history of the Christian church, in every age, affords sorrowful confirmation and illustration of the foregoing statements, and teaches us to beware how we employ the gifts and graces with which we have been endowed ; that *conscience* needs to be sanctified and guided ; that *religiousness* needs to be moulded according to the character and conduct of Christ; and that *zeal* needs to be under the control of divine inspiration, and Christian intelligence. We see—

II. HOW A DESPERATE ANTAGONIST MAY BECOME A DEVOTED ADVOCATE IN A GOOD CAUSE. Probably Saul had charge of the sentence against Stephen, and was responsible for its execution, as he was the most prominent person among those who stoned the proto-martyr. As he stands by, consenting to the cruel act, he was ( $\alpha$ ) *In antagonism to Christ*. He may have seen and heard Him ; we know he hated Him, and considered Him as a usurper and blasphemer, instead of the prophet, priest, and King of the Hebrew nation, and the world. But, now, instead of being willing to “crucify the Son of God atresh,” he was anxious to extend His kingdom among men, and to crown Him Lord of all ; and henceforth, he would desire to glory in nothing, but in the name and cross of Christ. ( $\beta$ ) *In antagonism to Christians*. He regarded the sect with bitter hatred, and resolved to do his best to exterminate all the disciples of Jesus from the face of the earth. But now they were his best friends, and most congenial companions, he was not ashamed of

Christ, nor of His followers, but gloried in their fellowship, and even aspired to have partnership in their sufferings. (*γ*) *In antagonism to Christianity.* The doctrines Christ taught were repulsive to Saul, before his conversion, and the religion he taught odious, and worthy only of oblivion. But, now, he would compass land and sea to make the glorious Gospel known, and would count not his life dear, so that he might testify of the Lord Jesus, and extend His kingdom in the world. He became, in his sermons and epistles, a most heroic and devoted advocate of the cause he once endeavoured to overthrow. Let these facts encourage and cheer us ; for every opponent to the truth is a possible ally. Those, who, to-day are antagonists to the truth may, to-morrow, be its powerful and popular advocates. Saul of the early, and Bunyan of the later, time give us warrant for such expectations. Servants of Satan may become, through divine grace, valiant soldiers of the cross.

III. HOW THE GRANDEST HISTORIES MAY GROW FROM THE MOST UNPROMISING BEGINNINGS. It seemed a very sad beginning for Christianity, when its Founder was crucified, and its first apostles were slain ; but the blood of Christ was the spring of redemption, and the martyr's blood has been the seed of the Church. The sufferers for truth have not been victims, but *victors*, in their hour of trial and death. *The Christian Church*—born in sorrow, and rocked in storms, has become mighty, and irresistible, as an immovable rock, in the tide of rolling years. Saul, standing by, and consenting to the death of Stephen, seemed likely to become a monster of iniquity and cruelty, his life had a most unpromising beginning, but what a grand history grew out of it !



Christianity, as represented in Stephen, seemed likely to be crushed, Christians seemed likely to be destroyed, as well as dispersed abroad ; but the means adopted to trample out the Gospel only led to its greater and wider triumphs ; and the spoils and successes of eighteen centuries are the outcome of the sorrows and struggles of unpromising infant days. All this is in harmony with the teaching of Nature ; where we see that great events hang upon little things, and where the most wonderful results often flow from the weakest and most unpromising agencies and beginnings.

CONCLUSION.—(1) Let us never despair of the ultimate triumph of truth and goodness, because their power seems feeble, and their advocates few. (2) Let none despair of making something grand of life, though it may have had an untoward beginning. (3) Let the wrongdoing of our past life not check us, but stimulate us in our new career of devotion to the cause of Christ ; for Saul's early errors did not disqualify him to become an apostle. (4) Let us avoid the spirit and conduct of Saul, the bigoted and persecuting religionist, and seek to emulate the spirit of the sainted Stephen. We are called upon to be martyrs, *i.e.*, "*witnesses* ;" and, if we cultivate the martyr's spirit, and live the martyr's life, the martyr's rest and reward will be ours, *whenever*, or *however*, death may come to us.

F. W. BROWN.

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## THE BEST COVENANT.

“NOW IT IS IN MY HEART TO MAKE A COVENANT WITH THE LORD GOD OF ISRAEL, THAT HIS FIERCE WRATH MAY TURN AWAY FROM US.”—2 *Chron.* xxix. 10.



HE degeneracy of true religion in Judah at this particular period was very great. It had reached its climax. Perhaps we might say that it was fallen so low, that there could hardly be a lower depth. At the age of twenty-five, this godly young prince, Hezekiah, is invested with regal honours. He was son of the most corrupt of the kings of Judah. For a long time, “Ichabod” was virtually written upon the walls of Zion. What did Ahaz care for the honour of Jehovah? He had no reverence for Him, no respect for His law, none for His preachers—the prophets.

The worship and idolatries of Syria were actually set up in the holy place. This very thing is repeated in England to-day. The idolatries of Rome are rife, even in a Protestant church. “So they wrap it up,” “My people love to have it so,” which is worse still. The temple of the Lord was fashioned after the idolatrous model of Syria. By-and-bye, it is shut up altogether! What a prospect for a young prince! How did he demean himself? There is here, again, a lesson for us. If we did only see it, and had our souls imbued with the same spirit, as that of Hezekiah, the old and animating scenes of our *Welsh* revivals would follow. Hezekiah did not sit down in a sullen mood, nor did he despair, his faith looked up. There was then, and there ever is, “a bright light in the cloud.” God’s name and covenant were still the heritage of Judah.

The young king arose with the occasion. He conceived a noble enterprise. He lost no time in putting it into form.

Judgment, literally, began *with the house of God*. The temple was purified. The idol gods were demolished, and hurled into the brook Kedron. Even the brazen serpent was not spared. It had become an object of worship. It is, therefore, and we presume by divine command, doomed and degraded to the same fate as that of the idol gods of Syria. "Them that honour me I will honour." In God's moral government this is a great fact. It was so now. The pious and enthusiastic young king was prospered. The temple was re-opened, the festivals were revived—no new machinery was brought into play, so as "to get up a revival." The old was resuscitated. A new life was put into it, and the result was, that religion flourished in Judah as it had not done since the days of David.

These words may be regarded as the utterance of an earnest Christian leader, of an earnest minister or deacon, or of any earnest Christian in committing himself to a more determined work for Christ. Or they may be taken as the utterance of any one who is determined to be on the Lord's side. Our inquiry, then, is—

I. WHAT IS MEANT BY MAKING "A COVENANT WITH THE LORD?" The word "covenant" is an Old Testament word. Its meaning and spirit have a place in the New Testament—in the religion of Jesus Christ. In our days it means that gracious engagement on God's part to bestow on man the very favour which he supremely needs, and on terms of God's own ordering; and, on the part of man, his acceptance of these terms, according to apostolic exhortation—"Be ye reconciled

to God." The words, then, (1) Imply, on man's part, the conviction of the fact, the folly, and the sin of his being out of covenant with God. The fact is, that man is at variance with God; that he is not what God meant him to be. There has been a moral lapse. The crown has fallen from his head. Any theories about the origin of sin are human follies. They bear no fruit for good. The fact of personal sin is patent. We are certain of it. The conviction of this is a great point in the sinner's return to God. The folly of it is shown by God's own account of it, better than in anything that we can say, "For my people have committed two evils: they have left me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water."

The sin of such conduct is easily understood in the light of God's character, and it is comprehensively suggested by the word "Me." "They have left ME." "I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib, but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider." "They have hated me without a cause."

(2) To make a covenant with the Lord implies a willing and entire abandonment of every other covenant under which the soul has been enslaved. An impenitent soul is decided, confessed, in its moral position and relationship. Its place is not a neutral one. It is not a doubtful one. "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His." Whose is he, then? "He that is not with me is against me." "Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey?"



The returning sinner is resolved to break this covenant, to abandon this service for ever, rather than that God in judgment, should arise and do it. "And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand." The language of the returning soul is, "What have I any more to do with idols?" "Other Lords besides *Thee* have had dominion over us, but by thee only will we make mention of Thy name." "What wilt Thou have me to do?" "The dearest idol I have known," &c.

(3) It implies a hearty reception of the terms on which a covenant with God can be made, "God is in Christ reconciling the world to Himself." "And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat." "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." "If any man will come after me let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." "Are ye able to be baptised with the baptism that I am baptised with?" The day of God's power will be acknowledged by the returning soul, and Christ's own condition heartily accepted. "Not my feet only but also my hands, and my head."

II. WHAT COUNSEL AND DIRECTION CAN WE OFFER TO THOSE WHO HAVE IT IN THEIR HEART TO MAKE A "COVENANT WITH THE LORD?" (1) Be not satisfied with only having it in your heart to make a covenant with the Lord. The fact that it is in the heart is a sign for good. All such desires are good, and they come from God. But the best desire would be worthless if it did not grow into a fact. Thoughts of good might be conceived in the soul, when the ability to give them an outward shape might fail. In the case under consideration it could not be so. David did not build the temple. God did not mean that he should,

but God was pleased with the desire that David had in his heart to build it.

A good purpose should be followed by a prompt execution of it. "I will arise and go to my father, and he arose," &c. "One thing have I desired of the Lord," &c. John Howard would never have bettered the condition of criminals in the prisons of Europe if he had only desired to do it. A youth will never be a scholar by merely desiring to be one.

(2) Let the past mistakes which you have made through trusting to your own hearts set you upon your guard against trusting them in the future. You have been deceived a hundred times in this way. You have been cheated into this folly of procrastination, and found that it has not made the work of decision easier, but more difficult. "Go thy way at this time, and when I have a convenient season I will call for thee." That convenient season never came. If religion is the *summum bonum*, why delay? Is there anything gained by delay?

(3) If you make a covenant with the Lord, resolve that it shall be a perpetual one. The Lord has no pleasure in spasmodic services. These are a dishonour to our Master, an injury to the individual soul, a trouble and a hindrance to the church. "Will ye also go away?" "No one having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." "Ye did run well who hath hindered you?" "They shall ask the way to Zion, *with their faces thitherward*, saying come and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten." "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him."

Of all the compacts which we make, this one is the best. "Be ye reconciled to God."

*Tenby.*

JOHN LEWIS.

# *Germes of Thought.*

## THE PREACHER'S FINGER-POST.

### Phases of a Corrupt Government.

"THEN THE BAND AND THE CAPTAIN AND OFFICERS OF THE JEWS TOOK JESUS, AND BOUND HIM, AND LED HIM AWAY TO ANNAS FIRST, FOR HE WAS FATHER IN LAW TO CAIAPHAS, WHICH WAS THE HIGH PRIEST THAT SAME YEAR. NOW CAIAPHAS WAS HE, WHICH GAVE COUNSEL TO THE JEWS, THAT IT WAS EXPEDIENT THAT ONE MAN SHOULD DIE FOR THE PEOPLE." John xviii. 12-14.

IN these verses human government appears—

I. ENDEAVOURING TO CRUSH THE RIGHT. "*Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus and bound Him.*" Why did the government of Judea desire so earnestly, and labour so indefatigably for the destruction of Christ? Was there anything in His *genealogy* to account for it? No. He was one of their own race—a Jew, who by birth came down

from the most illustrious of their ancestors. Was there anything in His *appearance*? Was He hideous in form or countenance, somewhat monstrous or repulsive in presence? Not so, I trow. In bodily presence I imagine Him to have been the highest beauty idealised, "*altogether lovely.*" Why then? He was the embodiment and fervid and fearless Advocate of RIGHT, right between man and man, and man and God. The government was wrong, wrong to its very core, and it could not bear the right. The Right flashed on their souls as sunbeams on diseased eyes. Hence they were determined to put an end to it, to kill it, to bury it, and to seal it down so that it should

rise no more. Corrupt governments are always against the right, hence the persecutions and the martyrdoms. Human government appears here—

II. Endeavouring to crush the right by the EMPLOYMENT OF HIRELINGS. Who were now employed? "*The band and the captain,*" were the Roman cohort, and the officers were the apparitors. There are in all countries and under all governments, multitudes of men so utterly dead to the sense of justice, and the higher instincts of manhood and independency, that they are ready at any hour to sell themselves for pay to services the most dishonourable and unrighteous. These have ever been, and still are, the ready tools of despots. From these come, for the most part, the soldiers who, at the command of the authorities for the time being, will

engage in the most iniquitous crimes with malignant enthusiasm and ruthless cruelty. Alas, that creatures formed in the image of God, endowed with grand possibilities, commissioned by heaven for services of justice and beneficence, should be thus so embruted and fallen! As we look upon them trooping forth, bearing with them the implements of cruelty and death at the bidding of their masters, we are urged to cry out with the prophet, "Can these dry bones live?" Can these thoughtless bipeds ever become men, alive with the sense of manly independence and personal responsibility? Human government appears here—

III. Endeavouring to crush the right in the NAME OF LAW. "*And led Him away to Annas first, for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was*

*the High Priest that same year.*" This Annas is pronounced by Josephus to have been the most fortunate man of his times. He had occupied the post of high priest for not less than fourteen years, and four of his sons had also filled that eminent office, and now his son-in-law Caiaphas occupied the distinction. His venerable age, his great abilities, his ancient title to the priesthood, invested him with great legal authority. Because the enemies of Christ wanted their diabolical conduct and intentions towards Him to be sanctioned by law, they now commanded their hirelings to take Him to Annas and Caiaphas. They gained their purpose, and went forth to enact the infernal tragedy of Calvary under the authority of law. The greatest crimes ever perpetrated under these heavens have been per-

petrated under the sanction of law. "We have a law, and by our law he ought to die." Despots say that law must be respected and sustained. But no, if the law is unrighteous, let it be despised and trampled out. What is wrong in morals can never be right in any law. Human government appears here—

IV. Endeavouring to crush the right UNDER THE PRETEXT OF A MISERABLE EXPEDIENCY. "*Now Caiaphas was he which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.*" This counsel is to be found in chap. xi. 49, 50. In relation to this counsel three remarks may be offered. First: That it was *apparently adapted to the end*. Christ was alienating the people from the institutions of the country, and shaking their faith in its authorities, and the most



effective plan for terminating the mischief seemed to be to put Him to death. This would appear to strike the evil at the root. When this was done, public excitement would soon subside, and the feeling of the people soon flow back to its old level, and roll on monotonously in its old channel as heretofore. It was anyhow plausible. Secondly: Though seemingly adapted to the end, it was *radically wrong in principle*. What right had Caiaphas to propose the death of any man, however criminal that man might be? And even assuming his right as a governor, to put a criminal to death—a prerogative, however, which we deny to all but God,—certainly there was no show of right in proposing the death of one who, like Christ, had never violated any law, who had wronged no one, but blessed all. The

apparent fitness of a measure to an end does not make it right. The only standard of right is the will of God. Thirdly: Their policy being radically wrong, *was ultimately ruinous*. Did the putting of Christ to death avert the dreaded calamity? Did it secure Judea from the invasion of the Romans? Did it serve in any way even the temporal interest of the country? No, no; it hastened the flight of the Roman eagle, it brought upon them judgments which speedily broke up their commonwealth, and beneath which the Jewish people had been groaning to this hour. Ah! what seems expedient to-day may prove in the future to have been most disastrous. Eternal principle is the only pillar to guide short-sighted creatures in their endless path. Let governments study the policy of Caiaphas.

## A Temporary Failing of True Courage.

"AND SIMON PETER FOLLOWED, JESUS AND SO DID ANOTHER DISCIPLE: THAT DISCIPLE WAS KNOWN UNTO THE HIGH PRIEST, AND WENT IN WITH JESUS INTO THE PALACE OF THE HIGH PRIEST. BUT PETER STOOD AT THE DOOR WITHOUT. THEN WENT OUT THAT OTHER DISCIPLE, WHICH WAS KNOWN UNTO THE HIGH PRIEST, AND SPAKE UNTO HER THAT KEPT THE DOOR, AND BROUGHT IN PETER. THEN SAITH THE DAMSEL THAT KEPT THE DOOR UNTO PETER, ART NOT THOU ALSO ONE OF THIS MAN'S DISCIPLES? HE SAITH, I AM NOT. AND THE SERVANTS AND OFFICERS STOOD THERE, WHO HAD MADE A FIRE OF COALS; FOR IT WAS COLD: AND THEY WARMED THEMSELVES: AND PETER STOOD WITH THEM, AND WARMED HIMSELF." John xviii. 15-18.

I. HERE is true courage NOBLY DISPLAYED. "*And Simon Peter followed* (was following) *Jesus, and so did another disciple.*" This in all probability was John, so well known that his name is not given. These two disciples were

often found in special connection with each other, they now followed Jesus "*into the palace of the High Priest,*" or the court. Here is heroism. To follow One who was cursed by the nation, and being dragged in bonds by Roman ruffians to undergo a mock trial, and who in a few hours would, amid the fury of a maddened multitude, undergo the agonies of a terrible crucifixion, revealed a bravery of heart of no mean character. They stood firm and faithful to Him in whom they believed, although they knew that the spirit of their age and the rulers of their country were against Him.

II. Here is true courage TEMPORARILY FAILING. "*But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple* (John) *which was known unto the High Priest.*" How John

was known to the High Priest is not stated, although in Acts iv. 6. his name appears amongst the kindred of the High Priest. "*And spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter.*" It would seem that at this stage Peter's courage began to fail, for he halted at the door, so that John had to go and take him in. As he entered he was recognised by the portress who said to him, "*Art not thou also one of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not.*" Here is fear seeking to protect itself by falsehood. "*And the servants and officers stood there* (that is, in the quadrangular court), *who had made a fire of coals, for it was cold, and they warmed themselves, and Peter stood with them and warmed himself.*" Probably the "other disciple," John, had gone farther and followed Christ up, and entered the house.

But fear had taken possession of Peter, and to protect himself, he halted by the fire and mingled with the servants and officers who stood there, desiring, it may be, that he should be regarded as one of them. (On Peter's denials see my "Genius of the Gospel," under Matt. xxvi. 69).

Now here is a failure of courage which led to a terrible falsehood thrice repeated, even with curses. *Fear*, perhaps, is one of the most prolific parents of lies. *Greed* is a parent of lies, it fills the market with fallacies. *Vanity* is a parent of lies, it fills all social circles with misrepresentations. *Malice* is a parent of lies, it hatches the slanders that destroy reputations and often break hearts. But perhaps *fear* is the most fruitful source of lies, though these lies in my judgment are not the most

venal. They are not aggressive, but defensive. Still they cannot be justified, although some good men have sought to justify them. Their influence is pernicious. The influence of Peter's falsehood upon John, his fellow disciple, must have been most distressing, and the influence upon himself was to injure his self respect, and to sting him with remorse. But this fear was only temporary, his failing courage was soon restored. The look of Christ rallied the drooping forces of his moral manhood, and ever afterwards he appears as a hero amongst heroes in the cause of his Master. Witness his conduct before the Sanhedrim when he said to his accusers, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto man rather than unto God, judge ye." Witness his sermon on the day of Pentecost, &c. \*

CONCLUSION:—Learn (1) *The liability of a good man to moral reactions.* Here is Peter, who was almost constitutionally bold and courageous—so that He who knew what was in man called him a "rock" — struck with cowardice and trembling before the breath of a silly maid. So it often happens, men of great faith have sceptical moods, men of great hope desponding seasons, men of geneous natures have misanthropic feelings. Learn (2): That whatever the moral reactions, *the good element will ultimately prevail.* The cowardice of Peter was only a passing mood, courage lay at the root of his nature, and this courage came out in his after life in many a form sublimely inspiring. In his martyrdom, too, as given by tradition, the heroism of his soul came out in splendour.

## Christ Rejecting Popularity, Unmasking Evil, and demanding True Homage.

“JESUS ANSWERED THEM AND SAID, VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, YE SEEK ME, NOT BECAUSE YE SAW THE MIRACLES, BUT BECAUSE YE DID EAT OF THE LOAVES, AND WERE FILLED.”  
*John vi. 26.*

AFTER the miraculous feeding of the people, the disciples were commanded to cross over the sea of Tiberias, and during the storm that night Christ walked on the sea to their assistance, was taken on board the little ship, and they soon reached the other side. On the morrow as Jesus was teaching in the Synagogue, a multitude of those who had been fed the previous day came to Him. When He saw them He addressed them in the words of the text. We offer the following remarks—

I. Here we have Christ  
REJECTING THE FALSE POPU-  
LARITY OF MEN. These

persons were very enthusiastic, they were ready to crown Him their king when on the other side of the water, and now they were ready to offer the crown and follow Him to meet any foe. It was a grand opportunity, according to human calculation; if He would but comply with their wishes, they would go from place to place and make His fame known throughout the whole country, and He would become the most popular of men. But He would have none of it, because it was false in principle. He had no need to catch the fickle popularity of men in order to disseminate His truths; inasmuch as they were righteous and divine, He could wait for their gradual but certain growth and extension.



Many attempts are made to-day to gain the popularity of men, no sacrifice too great to be made, whereas the very attempt to gain it is an effectual barrier against the possession of the real thing. Popularity gained by the conscious departure from right principles or any of the duties of life is worse than worthless. There is a vast amount of talk to-day, about making the religion of Christ more popular. As if the truth of God, destined for all ages, which has the strength, the beauty, and the youth of eternity could be twisted and fashioned so as to suit our bombastic unreal age. This is to attempt to bring the head which towers in infinite majesty above the hills of eternity low enough for our babbling age with its smattering knowledge of science to place its tinsel gaudy crown on it. The truths

of God cannot become popular on any such terms, and as long as they are held forth in their simple grandeur, speaking eloquently against falsehood and deceit, men will turn away from them as they did from the Christ who spoke them.

II. Here we have Christ  
UNMASKING THE ROOT-EVIL  
OF THE HUMAN HEART.  
These people thought the best thing they could do would be to follow Jesus, because all their temporal wants would be satisfied; no more toil and care, but an easy life to them. Their love of ease and selfishness are revealed in these words. In the days of Christ selfishness was glaringly prominent in social, political and religious circles. The question often asked now, is not, "How can I lead the most useful and self-denying life?" but, "How can I have the easiest life and the most conducive to my

personal advantage?" It would be a rare sight to see a man starting in business and carrying it on, not for the sake of wealth and position, but to express to the world what righteous principles can do in the mercantile world. Is it not true that thousands profess religion in order to escape from hell and to have a golden harp after finishing their sighing and arm-folding career on earth? They are ready to crown the Christ of God if He will gratify *their sensual* ideas of the infinite and eternal.

III. Here we have Christ DEMANDING THE PURE HOMAGE OF MAN. "Not because ye saw the miracles." This enthusiasm did not arise from their having caught a part of the spirit of those miracles they had seen. Not because they had seen the divinity which flashed like lightning out of those marvellous

works, but because they had partaken of the loaves and fishes and were filled. It is only those who will follow Christ when He is hungry, seeking help from the fig tree; when He has not a farthing to pay the tax; when He is led through the streets of Jerusalem, mocked and spat upon; yea, only those who will remain faithful when He is hanging on the tree, who will have the honour to place the crown on His sacred head. To admire a man for his liberality in feeding the hungry is right; but the admiration of a pure, loving, righteous character, though he has not a penny to give away, is far nobler. There is not a higher, brighter, diviner character in the universe than that of Christ, and He claims our homage on that account. The loaves and fishes must not form an element in our admiration of Him. The husband's

love for his wife is not owing to her beauty, her intellectual abilities, nor her domestic activities; his love has gone deeper than all that, and has entwined itself around her very being. Her beauty may fade, her reason may give way, and her limbs may be paralysed, but his love does not grow cold. So

our love to Christ must entwine itself around His spiritual being; this alone will last. All homage and work will be rejected unless they emanate from a pure unselfish love to Him as the great Revealer of God and the true Friend of man.

CYMRŌ.

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GENERATIONS UNITED BY COMMON LABOUR AND JOY.—“And Isaac digged again the wells of water,” &c. (Gen. xxvi. 18.) What Isaac did all generations practically do—enter on the labours and participate in the enjoyments of the men of preceding ages. I. The existing generations SUCCEED TO THE LABOURS of those who are gone. In the days of Abraham men were digging wells, but they were gone, the wells they dug had either been, perhaps, filled up or dried, and Isaac set to the work. Thus it is, we are ever entering into the labours of those who have passed away. It is a peculiarity of the human race. Birds build their nests, but their successors do not take up their work and improve or extend their constructions. Divine benevolence is to be seen in this arrangement. (1) It serves to weld all generations in a common interest. When we take up the work of our fathers, whether it be mechanical, commercial, social, political, or religious, we are brought into conscious contact with their ideas, their plans, their minds, and we feel a kind of mental oneness with them. And when we do our little piece of life work, our minds often run down to those who will arise and take it up. Thus all generations are not only united in nature, but become united in ideas and in soul. (2) It serves as a guarantee of progress in the quality of human productions. The young, with new ambitions, fresh ideas, and vigorous faculties, enter on the labours of their ancestors both with the determination and capacity of improving them. Thus human works are improving. Agriculture, architecture, government, &c., all are on the constant rise. II. The existing generations ENTER ON THE ENJOYMENTS of those that are gone. The wells which Abraham and his contemporaries enjoyed were now for Isaac and the men of his age. Heaven has given the same wells of enjoyment to all. There is: (1) The well of *sensuous* enjoyment. (2) The well of *intellectual* enjoyment. (3) The well of *social* enjoyment. (4) The well of *religious* enjoyment. The same wells remain.

# Notes on the Epistle to the Colossians.

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REFERRING our readers for all historical and critical remarks about this Epistle to the able Commentaries of LIGHTFOOT and ELLICOTT, and FARNER'S more recent "*Life and Work of St. Paul*," it is nevertheless necessary to carry into and throughout our consideration of the entire Epistle, what was its main purpose. Throughout St. Paul is dealing with the twofold evil that had arisen in the Colossian Church—an error half Judaic, half Gnostic—an error that was theological and practical. It arose from the wrong conception of matter as inherently evil and as demanding intervening mediators between the material system of things and God; and at making abstinence from contact with material things, as far as might be possible, very incumbent on the godly. This error has its modern analogies in Sacerdotalism, and in Pietism. To combat the error then and now the *Plenitude of Christ* must be preached; Christ the fulness therefore the all sufficient Mediator, therefore too the all sufficient Consecrator of the material system. The errors of the Ritualist, and of the Recluse are both met by this great fact.

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## No. XIV.

### THE CHRISTIAN VIEW OF FAMILY LIFE.

"WIVES, SUBMIT YOURSELVES UNTO YOUR OWN HUSBANDS, AS IT IS FIT IN THE LORD. HUSBANDS, LOVE YOUR WIVES, AND BE NOT BITTER AGAINST THEM. CHILDREN, OBEY YOUR PARENTS IN ALL THINGS: FOR THIS IS WELL PLEASING UNTO THE LORD. FATHERS, PROVOKE NOT YOUR CHILDREN TO ANGER, LEST THEY BE DISCOURAGED." *Col.* iii. 18-21.

THE ascetic spirit which, as we have before said, was abroad in the early Colossian Church, was at once so ascetic and so pietistic that it undervalued home, depreciated family ties, despised human relationships: We

have heard Paul boldly meet this spirit with the great doctrine that Christ is the Fulness of all things, Sustainer of all, Mediator of all, King of all, End of all. Here, and in preceding paragraphs, he is meeting detailed develop-

ments of that evil spirit by detailed precepts flowing out of that great doctrine of Christ the Fulness. In our text the apostle teaches what we may group around three points.

I. THE DUTIES OF FAMILY LIFE ARE RECIPROCAL. He addresses first one and then another of the group in a home. He does not speak of them, or describe them to one another, but sharply, smartly, directly, he turns to each with the summons "ye." And thus he summons each to the task of his own duty, the fulfilment of his own obligation. As in some noble antiphon the singers take up their alternative parts, so in the music of home life the members of the family respond with their alternative duties. Between husband and wife, parent and child, the only truly Christian relationship is that of interdependence, and of reciprocity.

II. THE PRINCIPLES TO GUIDE FAMILY LIFE ARE SIMPLE. The statement of the principles here does not seem intended to be exhaustive. Some parallel passages as to the Ephesians, are much more complete. But the principles here noted are specimens. They are moral samples of what must actuate family life. And they are simple enough. Nothing grand, romantic, or impossible. "*Wives submit.*" This cannot mean where conscience protests. It must rather indicate where taste or opinion differ. Defer rather than strive. "*Husbands love.*" This great king-word love (which Paul explains in 1 Cor. xiii.), claims for the husband what Christ gives to the Church—His all. And one injunction of that love will be, "be not bitter," *i.e.*, rough, rude exasperation. Many a courtier in society is uncouth as a bear at home.



Then he is not a Christian husband after this model. "*Children obey.*" Cultivate the spirit in which the child Jesus went down to Nazareth, and was subject to his parents. Such a going down prepares for the true exaltation, such subjection qualifies for subsequent sovereignty. "*Fathers provoke not.*" Avoid the harshness, and even the thoughtless exactions from your children by which their spirits will become sullen, hopeless, moody. They will want spirits that parents have helped to make buoyant, not that parents have broken.

III. THE MOTIVE FOR FULFILLING THE DUTIES OF FAMILY LIFE IS DIVINE. Whilst secondary motives are thus given to fathers, &c., we find in the pas-

sage the highest motive is again and again pressed. "In the Lord," "well pleasing to the Lord," "as unto the Lord," &c. Such a life as Paul described can only be achieved by the force of sufficient motive. And such motive he supplies. Here is argument enough for such a course of conduct, inspiration enough for such a spirit of family life. "In the Lord." There is a wonderful fullness of meaning in that phrase as the Greek language employed it. But not a profounder fulness than the Christian experience interprets when it shows Jesus to be the Source of Motive, the Circle of Duty, the very Sphere of Being to the Christ-loving man.

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*Bristol.*

# Seeds of Sermons on St. Paul's Epistle to Philippians.

Having gone through all the verses in the Epistle to the Ephesians (see "Homilist," Vol. xxii. to xxviii.), we proceed to develope, with our usual brevity, the precious germs of truth contained in this letter. The following remarks, as a standing introduction, may contribute some portion of light to the whole Epistle :—Notice (1) *The residence of the persons addressed.* Philippi—whose ancient name was Crenides—was a city of Macedonia, and called after the name of Philip of Macedon, because he rebuilt and fortified it, B.C. 358. and afterwards colonised by Julius Cæsar, who invested the population with the privilege of a Roman City. It was the first place in Europe where the Gospel was preached by Paul, an account of which we have in the sixteenth chapter of the Acts. It was during his second missionary tour, and about A.D. 53.—Notice (2) *The occasion of the Epistle.* The contributions which the Philippians had made towards supplying the Apostle's necessities when a prisoner at Rome, evidently prompted its production.—Notice (3) *The scene from which the Epistle was addressed.* That it was from Rome where he was a prisoner is clear, from chapters i. 1-13, iv. 22. It would seem from the Epistle that he was expecting a speedy decision of his case, and hoped to obtain his release. Epaphroditus had been despatched to him from the Philippian Church with pecuniary contributions for the Apostle's relief, and on his return the Apostle entrusted this letter for conveyance. This would be about A.D. 63.—Notice (4) *The general character of the Epistle.* It is all but free from any censure, and breathes a warm and generous feeling through every part. The Epistle gives us the impression that the Philippian Church was one of the most pure, consistent, and generous, of that age. About 40 or 50 years after this Epistle was written, we are informed that Ignatius, on his way to martyrdom passed through Philippi, and was most warmly received in that city.]

## No. VII.

### AN IDEAL LIFE BLOOMING INTO A HAPPY DEATH.

"FOR TO ME TO LIVE IS CHRIST,  
AND TO DIE IS GAIN." *Phil.* i. 21.

Paul, having expressed in the close of the preceding verse his supreme resolve that Christ should be magnified in his body, whether it be by life or by death, here describes the life he was determined to live, and the death which he was certain to realise. The subject of these words is an *ideal life blooming into a happy death.* Here is—

I. An IDEAL LIFE. "For to me to live is Christ." An utterance this terse and pithy, carrying the divinest idea of life. The meaning may be thus expressed: *living, I shall live Christ.* I shall live as He lived, with the same master purpose and inspiration. In relation to this life two remarks may be made, First: It is *sadly rare.* Indeed, it is rare to *live* at all, *living* and *existing* are widely different conditions of being. All who breathe, sleep, eat, drink, follow out

their animal instincts, exist, but none but those who have some dominant purpose that fires their passions and concentrates their faculties live. To live means earnestness in some pursuit or other; the pursuit may be political, martial, mercantile, literary, artistic, or religious, and all who are earnest in their quest may be said to live. But this kind of life is *rare*. Millions exist on this earth for seventy years and do not in this sense live one day; whereas those who have lived earnestly have become grey and old in a single night. The martyr, the night previous to his execution, lives years in a few hours. The thoughtless thousands who bowed to the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up existed, the three Hebrew youths lived an age the night before they were thrown into the fiery furnace. Saul of Tarsus lived the three days and three nights after he was divinely smitten with the conviction of sin, while he lay still and sightless. Indeed, to be earnest in anything is to live. If you take a census of those who *exist* on the earth you have only to count the numbers that breathe, and they are legion; but if you take the census of those who *live* you must count the souls that

are really in earnest, and they are in a terrible minority.

But whilst it is rare for men to live at all, it is far rarer for men to *live to Christ*, to live the ideal life, the life in which all bodily impulses are governed by the intellect, and all the intellectual faculties governed by the conscience; and all the powers of the conscience ruled by the will of God. To live as Christ lived is to become incarnations of Him. This was the life that Paul determined to live, and with this determination he brought all the rivulets issuing from the heart ocean of his being into the majestic stream of a Christly philanthropy and devotion. Alas, again, how rare this life. If the masses of men who are really in *earnest*, and who therefore *live*, were to express their belief, they would say, for us to live is wealth, power, science no more. Christ is no more to them than any of the gods of Olympus. In relation to this life we remark Secondly: It is *manifestly imperative*. It is urged on every man by the authority of reason, conscience, and the gospel. Here is—

II. An ideal life BLOOMING INTO A HAPPY DEATH. "To die is gain." To whom? To the man whose *life* is Christly. It is not gain to those who live to

sensual enjoyments and worldly interests. No; by it they lose all that makes tolerable the existence. But to the Christly man it is "gain" on two accounts.

First: On account of what it *takes away*. Physical afflictions, secular anxieties, mental imperfections, moral depravities, spiritual temptations; in one word, all that pains the body, deludes the judgment, saddens the heart, and deadens the conscience. Death is "gain" to the Christly man. Secondly: On account of what it *bestows*. Perfection in his being, character, friendships, worship, enjoyments. Death is indeed then "gain." Shall the Christ-living man dread it? Shall the diseased man dread the hour in which he leaves his couch of suffering and weakness, and goes forth into the green fields of nature with

vigorous limbs and buoyant health? Shall the exile dread the hour when the barque that bears him from the scenes of long banishment shall touch his natives shores? Shall the prisoner under the sentence of death dread the hour, promised by the clemency of his sovereign, when his fetters shall be struck off, and his dungeon door be opened, and he shall go forth to family and friends again? Sooner may this be than a Christ-living man dread death.

CONCLUSION: — How often preachers exhort their hearers to prepare for death, urging sometimes with marvellous animal vehemence most utilitarian considerations. Let them cease this work, and urge them to prepare to *live* Christ; right living insures happy dying. The ideal life lived out will bloom and fructify into a blessed immortality.

### Life in Comparison with Eternity.

"THE world is but our nursery,  
And heaven our manhood stage;  
This life is but our infancy,  
Eternity our age;  
And all earth's little griefs and joys,  
Like transient pains and idle toys,  
Which childish thoughts engage.

"A spark of an immortal fire,  
The spirit glimmers here,  
But in full splendour will aspire  
In heaven's congenial sphere;  
From passion, sin, and error free,  
Strong in its immortality,  
Unshackled, free, and clear."

Edmeston.

## Homiletical Breviaries.

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No. CCCXLI.

### Four Attributes of Divine Love.

“HE SHALL GATHER THE LAMBS WITH HIS ARM AND CARRY THEM IN HIS BOSOM.”—*Isaiah* xl. 11.

ISAIAH tells us here: I. Of the STRENGTH of the Divine love. “He shall gather with his arm.” Often it would be a matter of physical power to gather some weak and utterly helpless, or still more some wild and struggling lamb, into the shepherd’s arm. Always it is a matter of moral power thus to gather the souls imaged in such sheep. The power to overtake and elevate such an one as Saul of Tarsus is no power less “than the arm of the Lord revealed;” “The arm of the Lord made bare.” “He shall carry in his bosom.” Even greater power is involved in this than in first gathering in the arm. The power of endurance. Such power was that of the Divine love in Christ towards Peter. Saul of Tarsus gathered, Peter borne and borne with, are such tokens of the Divine life as Isaiah here figures in the Shepherd. He tells: II. Of the GENTLENESS of the Divine love. There is the exemplification of the tenderest gentleness when the Shepherd thus gathers in His kind arm, and then shelters in His warm bosom, the frightened or injured lamb. So with the Divine love that said to Mary, “Why weepest thou?” or to Thomas, “Reach hither thy hand.” Such as these, and millions since, praise God’s love with the words, “Thy gentleness has made me great.” Isaiah tells us here: III. Of the PROTECTIVENESS of the Divine love. That may be the chief thought in these words. For thus carried over rough ways and steep precipices, and thus gathered from marauder or wild beasts, the lamb was safe. So the Divine love promises, “No man shall pluck out of my hand.” Indeed, when God declares He will put their sins behind His back, He promises more than the intervention of His arm between soul and dangers: He promises the intervention of His entire Being. The text tells: IV. Of the ADAPTATIONS of



the Divine love. The words of the entire verse show how while God's love is like a shepherd's care for the entire flock, it is detailed and definite to each want, whether of wearied mothers, or frail lambs. This Christ means when He says, "I know my sheep." For He means not only I know *who* they are, but *what* they are.

Bristol.

URIAH R. THOMAS.

No. CCCXLII.

### The Body Becoming a Second Personality.

"O WRETCHED MAN THAT I AM! WHO SHALL DELIVER ME FROM THE BODY OF THIS DEATH? I THANK GOD THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD." *Rom. vii. 24-25.*

THE writer of this chapter represents himself as having *two personalities*.<sup>\*</sup> The one personality is represented as the inner man, and the other as the outer man, that is, the body. A word or two about the human body. I. It is in the UNREGENERATE MAN A PERSONALITY. "I am carnal," that is, I am become flesh. This is an abnormal, a guilty, and a perilous fact. The right place of the body is that of the organ, the instrument, the servant of the mind, a mere force which the mind should use for its own high purpose. But this, through the pampering of its senses, the gratification of its lusts, and through the creation of new desires and new appetites, by the mind's imagination, becomes such a power over man that Paul represents it as a personality, the thing becomes an *ego*. This is terribly sad, yet it is, alas, common: almost everywhere the body is the *ego* of the man, the "I" that inspires, rules, directs. II. As a personality it BECOMES A TYRANT. "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" It is represented in this chapter as a personality that *enslaves, slays, destroys* the soul, the inner man. It is a "body of death." It drags the soul to death. When man becomes conscious of this tyranny, as he does when the "commandment" flashes upon the conscience, the

\* See "Homilist," Vol. viii. Page 109.

soul becomes intensely miserable, and a fierce battle sets in between the two personalities in man. The man cries out, "What shall I do to be saved?" "Who shall deliver me?" III. As a tyrant IT CAN ONLY BE CRUSHED BY CHRIST. "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." In the fierce battle Christ came to the rescue, and struck the tyrant down. In this epistle the writer shows that man struggled to deliver himself (1) Under the *teachings of nature*, but failed. (See chap. i.). He became more enslaved in materialism. (2) Under the *influence of Judaism*, but failed. By the deeds of the law no man was justified or made right. Under Judaism men filled up the measure of their iniquities. Who, or what, then, could deliver? No philosophers, poets, or teachers. Only one. "Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ."

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No. CCCXLIII.

### The Gospel Mission.

"WHEREUPON, O KING AGRIPPA, I WAS NOT DISOBEDIENT TO THE HEAVENLY VISION, BUT SHEWED," &c. *Acts xxvi. 19, 20.*

Mark how Paul worked out his new and Divine mission. I PROMPTLY. "I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision." "When it pleased God to reveal His Son in me," &c. II. CONTIGUOUSLY. "Shewed first unto them at Damascus and at Jerusalem," &c. This is the order, the nearest at hand, then gradually proceed. III. REFORMATIVELY. "That they should repent and turn to God." Repentance implies two things. (1) A renewed mind. (2) A renewed life. "Works meet for repentance." Conduct answering to the renewed state of the soul.

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# The Preacher's Scrap Book.

## REMARKS OF VARIOUS CRITICS ON THE NEW REVISION.



HE Rev. G. Vance Smith regards it as "a good work accomplished." He considers, however, that many of the old renderings have been unnecessarily sacrificed to "a quite gratuitous literalism." "In the use of the

tenses in the New Testament Greek, there is evident very much of the Hellenistic influence. Men whose native language was so closely akin to the ancient Hebrew, and to whom Greek was only an "acquired tongue, did not use the varied and copious tenses of the Greek verb with the freedom or accuracy of a Xenophon or a Thucydides." He instances John iv. 23, 24, as illustrative of the clumsiness of such renderings. As a rule, in the Revised Version, the article is too often expressed. "This sometimes injures the idiom of the English, and in truth impairs or misrepresents the force of the original. The Greek article was used to generalise as well as to render definite; in such cases, the meaning in English is better rendered by *a* than by *the*. In Matt. vi. 25, 'the sense would have been given by omitting the article rather than retaining it with 'food' and 'raiment.' So Matt. vii. 24, 25, 'the rock,' 'a rock' is more suitable to English idiom; as in 2 Cor. xii. 12, where the Greek is τὰ μὲν σημεῖα τοῦ ἀποστόλου, rendered 'the signs of an apostle.' Here the generalising force of the article is recognised, and the rendering is correct. In this case, the form allowed in Matt. v. 15, and elsewhere would not have been admissible, showing us that the change there was unneeded, and that the Authorised is right." As to the rendering of pronouns—"The Authorised was 'cast ye your pearls,' but the Greek is without the word 'ye' and so the revisers have left it out, but then it is latent in the verb, and many readers will think that the English sounds better with it, while nothing is gained to the sense by leaving it out." As to the prepositions, ἐν "is constantly used after the manner of Hellenistic Greek, and can only be understood when

attention is paid to the way in which the Hebrew Beth is expressed in the Septuagint. It is constantly used of the *instrument*, frequently of the *manner* or accompaniment, and also of the *cause*. The instrumental force of the word the revisers have sometimes recognised and sometimes not, and this quite arbitrarily, for anything that appears." Ephesians iv. 30 now reads:—"Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God in whom ye were sealed." "Can any intelligible meaning be assigned to the Greek, except the obvious instrumental seuse so constantly met with? 'Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God by which ye were sealed'—by the reception of which, or the inspiration of which, ye were marked out, set apart, secured as disciples unto the expected day of the second coming. Such is clearly the sense of the verse, but it is missed altogether by the new version." Excepting generally to the employment of the word "Ghost" instead of "Spirit," he objects to "the personal turn so gratuitously given to the pronouns," as "himself," Rom. viii. 16, the Greek being the neuter pronoun αὐτό. He recognises the fact that a quasi-personality is occasionally attributed to πνεῦμα but argues that the same kind of personality is attributed to "charity" now rendered "love," 1 Cor. xiii. 4-5, where the revisers have "actually changed the Authorised personal pronouns feminine, into the corresponding neuters." On a much debated rendering, he says:—"In Matt. v. 37, we read, 'Let your speech be, Yea, yea : Nay, nay : and whatsoever is more than these is of the evil one.' The margin runs, 'Or evil : as in ver. 39 ; vi. 39.' This tells us that affirmations which are stronger than Yea, yea : Nay, nay, are the suggestion of Satan. Can this really have been the speaker's meaning? . . . The words τὸ πονηρόν occur twice in the New Testament with the general or abstract meaning, as similar phrases often do in classical writers. The two places are Luke vi. 45, 'The evil man (ὁ πονηρὸς) . . . bringeth forth evil.' (τὸ πονηρόν); Rom. xii. 9, 'abhorring evil' (τὸ πονηρόν). These cases are beyond question, and they would abundantly have justified the retention of 'evil,' as in the Authorised form of the prayer." Contrasting the different modes of dealing with the words "Hades" and "Gehenna," the one being transferred, as a proper name, and the other translated "hell," he says: "Gehenna was the name of a valley near Jerusalem. The word by its Hebrew etymology means 'valley of Hinnom,' an ancient name found in the Old Testament (2 Kings xxiii. 10 ; 2 Chron. xxviii. 3). In former times it had been the scene of

idolatrous rites and of human sacrifices to the god Moloch. Hence to the later Jews it was a place of abomination, and to mark its character it was defiled by the various refuse of the city there thrown and kept burning that it might be consumed. A veritable place of fire, deserving of its name and reputation! where, amidst corrupting matters, worms, too, might live, until the all-consuming element swallowed them up. Thus there was here literally a *πῶρ αἰώνιον*, an age-enduring fire, an 'unquenchable fire'—a place 'where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched.' (Mark ix. 43-48). It is easy to understand that, Gehenna being such a place as this, it would become the representative, in popular speech, of the place of punishment reserved for the wicked and the unbelieving, who were doomed to destruction at the final judgment on the coming of the Messiah."

Dr. Robert Young thus criticises the use of the words "princes" and "governor" in Matt. ii. 6:—"Though both these words are derived from the same root, and should be rendered uniformly, they are left untouched; while in Mark xiii. 9. and Luke xxii. 12, the former is rendered 'governor,' and the latter in Luke xxii. 26 and Acts xv. 22 remains 'chief.' 'That shall rule' is made 'which shall be shepherd of,' though the old rendering is retained in Rev. ii. 27, xii. 5, xix. 15, while in John xxi. 16 it is made 'tend,' and in Acts xx. 28 it is 'feed.'"

Dr. Joseph Angus remarks:—"The effect of small changes on the argument and connection of pages deserves illustration. In Rom. ii. 17, the reading 'Behold' should be 'But if'—the effect of the addition of a single letter. 'Behold' may make the previous verses refer to Jews. 'But if' makes the previous verses refer to 'every one who judges' Jew or Gentile; and the verses 17-29 refer specifically to Jews. In Rom. ii. 13, the true reading is 'For not the hearers of a law (not the law) are just before God, but the doers of a law (not the law) are justified.' The principle laid down is universal, and not applicable to Jews only. In Rom. viii. 11, 'through (or by) his Spirit that dwelleth in us,' is probably the correct reading; but the margin, 'because of his Spirit that dwelleth in us,' has respectable support. In the one case the indwelling Spirit is the means of our resurrection; in the other the indwelling Spirit is the ground or reason for it."

Dr. Phillip Schaff notes some mistranslations in the Authorised Version which are now corrected:—Cananean, an Aramaic word,



meaning zealot, is employed as descriptive of Simon, Mr. Schaff remarking:—"None of the apostles belonged to the race of the Canaanites." "Matt. xiv. 8: 'She (the daughter of Herodias) being put forward (or urged on, impelled) by her mother;' instead of 'being before instructed' (which the Greek *προβιβασθεῖσα* from *προβιβάζω*, to push forward, to investigate, can never mean). Matt. xv. 27: 'Yea, Lord, for even the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table;' instead of 'yet,' which prevents the meaning and destroys the force of the argument of the woman, who puts in her plea on the very ground of the Lord's words. Acts ii. 3: 'And there appeared unto them tongues parting asunder (or distributing themselves, *διαμεριζόμεναι*), like as of fire,' for 'cloven tongues.' Rom. iii. 25: 'Because of the passing over (or prætermis-  
sion *διὰ τὴν πάρεσιν*) of sins done aforetime,' instead of 'for the remission of sins that are passed.' The prætermis-  
sion of sins is an act of God's long-suffering; remission (*ἄφεσις*) an act of God's mercy; the former is a postponement, the latter is a granting of pardon."

Mr. Theodore Walrond, C.B., says:—"In the account given by St. Mark of the father who brought his son to have a dumb and deaf spirit cast out, in answer to the father's piteous appeal, 'If thou canst do anything have pity upon us and help us,' Jesus is made, in the old version, to say, 'If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth,' There is more of vividness and point in the new reading, according to which our Lord repeats in a tone of reproachful surprise the words of doubt, '*If thou canst!* All things are possible to him that believeth.' In 2 Corinthians xii. 1, it seems certainly more in St. Paul's manner to write, 'I must needs glory, though it is not expedient,' than to write, 'It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory.'"

Rev. A. T. Field, vicar of Holbrook, thus refers to a remark in the *Tablet*, treating the changes in the Revised Version as bringing it nearer to the Vulgate:—"We are told that the famous difference of readings in Luke ii. 14, is settled by the revisers in accordance with the Vulgate. Is this so? Let us bring together our Authorised and Revised Versions and the Vulgate and Douay. (1) 'On earth peace, good will toward men.'—Authorised Version. (2) 'On earth peace among men in whom He is well pleased.'—Revised Version. (3) 'In terra pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis.'—Vulgate. (4) 'In earth peace to men of good-will.'—Douay Version. Surely the Vulgate and the Douay both intend to express a quality

belonging to the men to whom peace is proclaimed. They are men of good-will; or, as Alford puts it, 'Peace on earth for those who like it'—'a translation,' as he says, 'untenable in Greek as well as in theology.'"

Rev. R. Balgarnie says:—"In Acts xii. 4, instead of Easter, we read, 'intending after the Passover to bring him forth to the people.' To have got this objectionable word at length expunged from the Bible is a clear gain to Christianity. In Acts xvi. 34 we have the important case of the baptism of a household where the father was as yet the only believer:—'He rejoiced greatly, with all his house, having believed in God.' The participle is singular and masculine. In Rom. vi. 4 we have to regret the omission of the article because it has an important bearing on the great controversy:—'Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptised in to Christ Jesus were baptised into His death? We were buried, therefore, with him through (the) baptism unto death: that like as Christ was raised. . . . 'The baptism unto death' here referred to was not Christian baptism with water, but a special ordinance for those devoted to martyrdom, and who were 'anointed with oil in the name of the Lord' and so 'baptised for the dead.' 'All we who were baptised into Christ' (the anointed). In the parallel passage, Col. ii. 14, those who had so died with Christ and had risen with Him were '*disanointed*,' ἐξαλειψως (*exaleipsas*) or had 'the bond of the ordinance' '*blotted out*.' In 2 Peter ii. 5, the revisers have made a change for the worse: "But preserved Noah *with seven others*, a preacher of righteousness." There is no warrant for this in the text: 'He preserved Noah, *eighth preacher of righteousness*,' an important confirmation of the theory that the antediluvian names were dynastic as well as individual."

Rev. B. S. Clarke, of Southport, thus refers to the change in Rom. i. 20:—"The word 'Godhead' appeared only three times in the Authorised Version, Acts xvii. 29, Rom. i. 20, and Col. ii. 9, and it represented three distinct Greek words, τό θεῖον, θεϊότης, and θεότης. We need only concern ourselves with the latter two. There is clearly a distinction between them. According to Trench ('Synonyms'), and all lexicons, θεϊότης is derived from θεῖος, divine; θεότης from θεός, God. If the revisers wished to mark the distinction between these two, how could they have done it otherwise than by translating the former 'Divinity' and the latter 'Godhead?' This is precisely what they have done, and that

without any detriment to the doctrine of the Deity of Christ, for the word 'Divinity' in Rom. i. 20, has reference to the great Creator, whom all sects of Christians acknowledge to be God, but the word 'Godhead' in Col. ii. 9 has special reference to Christ: 'For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,' That the doctrine of Christ's deity has not been compromised by the revisers, but rather strengthened, take three notable examples: 1 Tim. ii. 5 is thus rendered, 'For there is one God, one Mediator also between God and man, Himself man, Christ Jesus;' and Titus ii. 13, 'Looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ;' and Col. ii. 2, 'The mystery of God, even Christ.'"

Rev. Dr. Alexander Roberts, Professor of Humanity at St. Andrew's, and member of the New Testament Company, in a very useful little volume entitled "Companion to the Revised Version of the English New Testament" (Cassell, Petter, Galpin, and Co.), says:—"It is quite impossible to act upon the rule that the Greek aorist must always be rendered by the English past tense, and that being so, differences of opinion will necessarily arise with respect to particular passages. But, while this is admitted, there is, at the same time, no doubt that the strict grammatical meaning of the verse has often been departed from in the Authorised Version, not only without necessity, but even to the detriment of the sense. Thus, at Matthew ii. 15, instead of 'I have called,' we ought to read, 'I called,' the reference being to a historic fact in the distant past. So, at Acts xix. 2, the meaning is quite obscured by the rendering 'Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?' It ought to be, 'Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed?'" In illustration of the changes resulting from an accurate rendering of the prepositions, he points to 1 Cor. viii. 6, which now reads: "To us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through Him." The rendering of two different verbs by the same English word has, he says, in John xiii. 10, led to an obscuration of the sense. The passage now reads, "He that is bathed needeth not save to wash his feet," suggesting plainly to the reader that "as, literally, the man who has been bathed needs only to wash his feet from the defilement which has been contracted since leaving the bath, so, spiritually, the believer in Christ who has been cleansed from guilt by faith, needs not to have that process

repeated, but simply requires from day to day to be freed from the pollution which is contracted as he journeys through the world." "Teach" in the Authorised Version is the translation of five different Greek words, that which occurs in Matt. xxviii. ; 19, meaning to make disciples, and so requiring this rendering: "Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you."

Rev. Charles Martin, rector of Wood Norton, East Dereham, writes:—"What is the gain of having 'then' changed into 'therefore' in almost every passage in St. John's Gospel where the word *οὖν* occurs in the original? One might think the Gospel was a series of syllogisms. The effect is certainly oppressive. But, moreover, is it true? Does 'therefore' always fairly represent *οὖν* in idiomatic English? and even *μὲν οὖν* in John xx. 30? Surely in this case, at least, the margin might have allowed room for an alternative rendering? And if 'faithfulness' requires all this change in St. John, why is *οὖν* treated differently in the Acts, or John vi. 30? I notice another point involving apparent inconsistency. Why does 'by' still appear in the text in John i. 3, 17, but 'through' takes its place in Heb. i. 2, and other parallel passages? Is it because (as the Preface seems to imply) 'a reader of ordinary intelligence' might misunderstand the expression, 'By Whom He made the world,' but could make no mistake about 'All things were made by Him?' "

Rev. S. G. Green says:—"In the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. v. 22) our Lord is reported as saying, 'Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause is liable to the judgment.' The Revised Version follows the best authorities in omitting the words 'without a cause.' And justly; to check the feeling of anger when there *is* a cause for it according to human estimate, is the true spirit of the Gospel."

C. P., writing in the *Record*, says:—"In John iii. 3, according to the Revised Version, it is, 'Except a man be born *anew*.' Wherever the word occurs which is here translated *anew*, and in the Authorised Version *again*, and has reference to any gift or work of grace, it is invariably in the New Testament translated *from above*; and in no single instance besides this is it ever translated by the words *again* or *anew*, neither of which is a proper equivalent for the original. Moreover, by this translation of the word, the particular circumstance which occasioned the solemn declaration of our Lord is quite put out of sight. Nicodemus had said to Him, 'We know that thou



art a teacher come from God,' which is equivalent to saying 'come from above;' and Jesus answered and said, 'Except a man be born from above,' implying clearly that he can receive no benefit otherwise from a teacher come from above. In this same 3rd chapter of John it is said of the Lord Jesus by John the Baptist, 'He that cometh *from above* (using the same word as in v. 3) is above all.' Again, in v. 5, the only alteration from the Authorised Version is the omission of the little word (of), 'Except a man be born of water and the Spirit;' but they have still retained the article (the) before the word spirit, for which they have no authority in the original. The difference between 'except a man be born of water and the Spirit,' and 'except a man be born of water and Spirit,' I consider to be by no means unimportant. It seems, without the article, to show more clearly that both words mean one and the same thing, the word 'water' being intended to show the cleansing nature of the Spirit's operation, just as in the parallel expression in Matt. iii. 11, 'He shall baptize you with Holy Spirit and fire.' Again, in v. 8, they have retained the Authorised Version, with the exception of *voice* instead of *sound*. In this case they are right, but this very word 'voice' was the occasion years ago of convincing the writer of these remarks that the passage ought to be translated thus—'The Spirit bloweth where he will, and thou hearest his voice.' The word which is translated 'voice,' frequently as it occurs in the New Testament, always means an articulate voice speaking words; the one exception is only such in appearance, where it is said, in Matt. xxiv. 31, 'He shall send His angels with the great voice of a trumpet;' but the trumpet there spoken of is a heavenly trumpet, speaking words of high import, calling forth the elect from the four winds. More especially ought our attention to be called to the word which is in this place translated 'the wind.' It occurs in the New Testament nearly three hundred times, and invariably it means a spirit or spiritual being; and whenever a wind is spoken of it is always some other word which designates it. Is not this a very striking fact? Moreover, what a strange thing it would be that the same word in the original should be required in the beginning of the sentence to be translated 'the wind,' and in the end of it 'the spirit'? The word which is translated 'it listeth' occurs continually in the New Testament, and always expresses the will of an intelligent moral being, and not seldom the sovereign will of God."



The *Manchester Guardian* says:—"Galatians vi. 11, becomes 'See with how large letters I have written unto you with mine own hand,' instead of 'how large a letter.' It has been supposed that the Apostle's shortness of sight was the 'thorn in the flesh,' and that he is here pathetically alluding to the size of the letters he was obliged to form in writing. Another interesting change is Jude 12. 'These are spots in your feasts of charity' now reads, 'These are they who are hidden rocks in your love feasts.' In Romans i. 19, 'Men who hold the truth in unrighteousness' becomes 'Who hold down the truth'—a striking change. In the same epistle, iii. 20, 21, as indeed the whole chapter, gains greatly in clearness from the revision. In verse 21, instead of 'But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested,' we have 'But now apart from the law a righteousness of God hath been manifested,'—a clear argument instead of an enigma. In vi. 17, 'that form of doctrine which was delivered you' becomes 'that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered.' In verse 20 the Authorised Version reads, 'For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.' This is now 'For when ye were servants of sin, ye were free in regard of righteousness.' In Acts xxii. 27, the Authorised Version runs, 'And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, 'but I was free born.' We now read, 'And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this citizenship. And Paul said, but I am a *Roman* born.' The question was not all one of freedom or slavery, but simply whether a free man had the exceptional privileges of Roman citizenship, which, among other things, protected him from corporal punishment."

As a type of a class of passages where the changes that have been made will be not only accepted but welcomed, the *Pall Mall Gazette* adduces the narrative of the shipwreck of St. Paul. Everything here tends to vividness and clearness; precise and appropriate terms are used; and the general gain is very great. "Under the lee of Cyprus," and "under the lee of Crete," for "under Cyprus" and "under Crete," are changes which others besides nautical hearers and readers will appreciate. A positive error is corrected in the description of the harbour of Phœnice, which the Authorised Version describes as "lying towards the south-west and the north-west." It really is looking "looking north-east and south-east," the translators having missed the meaning of "down the south-

west wind and down the north-west wind." The tempestuous wind "Euroclydon" appears as "Euraquilo." It was not judged expedient, the *Pall Mall Gazette* supposes, to say a "north-easter."

The *Church Review* as to Matt. vi. 1, says, of the charge from alms to righteousness:—"The word in the Greek has more connection with mercy than with righteousness, and so its cognates are rendered in the New Testament; but probably the revisers could explain the reason for rendering it by two equivalents in the same text and context." As to Mark xiv. 24, where "new" is omitted and "covenant" takes the place of "testament:"—"The question between these two words involves a long inquiry, but few will deny that 'covenant' (connoting order, disposition of things) is the nearest equivalent, and certainly it is the most frequent one adopted in the New Testament." Luke x. 36. "The last two words are well changed into 'proved neighbour,' 'chief rooms' into 'chief seats,' and the force of the original is well brought out by changing 'all the people were very attentive to hear Him' into 'all the people hung upon Him listening.'" John xvi. 16: "The introduction of the words 'no more' depends on a various reading of the Greek; but the two words 'behold' and 'see' express a delicate shade of difference in the original, though, perhaps, it will be scarcely conveyed to the English reader. The words rendered respectively 'behold' and 'see' mean 'gazing on' as an earthly object, and 'gazing on' as a sight of awe and wonder."

The *Church Times* says:—"A change, clearing up a difficult passage, is in St. Mark vii. 19, where, for A. V. 'purging all meats,' we have the very ancient and more intelligible reading, *This he said, making all meats clean*—*i.e.*, abolishing the distinction of the Jewish law between various kinds of food. In St. Mark xii. 26 they have rightly taken De Wette's correction of the rendering, and give 'in the place concerning the bush'—that is, a reference to a particular paragraph, instead of 'in the bush' of A. V." As to Luke ii., "The translation in verse 7, should be 'her son, the First born,' a Pauline phrase we are justified in expecting from St. Luke. In 14 following the same reading as the Vulgate does, *eulokias*, they give us 'among men in whom He is well pleased.' This is not translation at all, but diffuse and exegetical paraphrase. They should have given 'men of good-will,' or 'of good-pleasure,' and *perhaps* might have put 'his' in italics before 'good-pleasure.'" "In Acts i. 3 an apparent emendation is a real error, namely,

omitting the A.V. 'infallible' before 'proofs,' as representing the word *tekmeriois*, for the definition of that word by Aristotle is that it is a *demonstrative* proof which is conclusive, and not a mere *semeion*, which may be challenged." "There is a very bad error indeed, in Acts v. 27, 30, where 'servant' is put instead of 'child'—a mere piece of pedantry, contradicting the whole analogy of faith, unwarranted by any Apostolic language, and flatly contradicting Heb. iii. 5, 6. 'Child' is not even given in the margin."

The *Record*, commenting on Rom v. 3, 4, now rendered, "Tribulation worketh patience, and patience probation; and probation hope," says:—"The object of reading 'probation' here is to remind the scholar that the word in the New Testament is *δοκιμή*, a fact which he, being a scholar, ought to remember of himself. 'Probation' (with all respect to the revisers) will not do here. Probation may end in failure. Does it necessarily engender hope? 'Approval,' or 'approbation,' does. Nor is the old word 'experience' so entirely beside the mark. The examiner receives experience by the examination, no less than the examinee. And God, who has no need of experience, sometimes proves men 'to try them,' 'to know all that is in their heart.'"

The *National Church* says:—"Again and again the new revisers seem to have adopted a word which has needlessly lowered the tone of the passage in which it occurs. Take such instances as 'the boy Jesus,' for 'the child Jesus,' 'beach' for 'shore,' 'signs' for 'miracles,' 'lender' for 'creditor,' 'release and ye shall be released' for 'forgive and ye shall be forgiven.' And it will take the English reader at least some time to be reconciled to such renderings as 'the officers *received* Him with blows of their hands,' or 'the place that is called *the Skull*' for 'Calvary,' or 'what shall a man give in exchange for his *life*?' for 'what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?' And in St. Luke xv. 9, 'eternal tabernacles' for 'everlasting habitations.' But, on the other hand, there are great and manifest improvements on the Authorised Version which clear away many a difficulty and throw light on much that is otherwise obscure. Thus, in St. John xxi., 'when day was now breaking' expresses admirably that the memorable scene on the shore of the Lake of Galilee took place in the grey of the early dawn; and 'Come and break your fast,' 'So when they had broken their fast,' are vastly superior to 'Come and *dine*,' and 'So when they had *dined*.' And, again, in St. Luke ix. 43, 'They were all

astonished at the majesty of God' for 'They were all amazed at the mighty power of God;' and in the parable of the unjust steward,' 'I have not strength to dig' for 'I cannot dig,' and 'trade ye herewith till I come,' for 'occupy till I come;' and the obscurity of Gal. vi. 11 is removed by substituting 'see with how large letters I have written unto you with mine own hand' for 'ye see how large a letter I have written unto you.'"

The *Baptist* says:—"Our American friends, who, we fear, have got but scant justice in this work, were manifestly right in seeking to have 'tempt' and 'temptation' replaced by 'try' or 'make trial of,' 'wherever enticement to what is wrong is not evidently spoken of,' and to our mind they might have enlarged their list of instances under this head. Few words lead to more misunderstanding in their use than this word temptation. Again, to have used 'demon' for the Greek word *daimon* would clearly have been more faithful to the text as well as more convenient for the reader. In 1 Cor. xv. certainly the word 'psychical' for 'natural' should have had place in the margin, if indeed, even at the expense of rhythm, the necessities of the case did not demand its use in the text. And we must add that the use of the title 'Holy Spirit' throughout for 'Holy Ghost,' would have been a change of inestimable value."

The *Athenæum* says:—"The time spent by the revisers upon the New Testament is much longer than that formerly employed by the companies who sat in King James's time. The latter were satisfied with less than three years. But their numbers were fewer, and though there may be safety in a multitude of counsellors, the tendency to talk increases.

The volume before us contains, in addition to the revised translation, a preface of considerable length, containing some remarks on the translation of 1611, the rules followed by the present workers, and an account of various particulars relating to text, translation, language, and marginal notes. Appended to the work is a list of readings and renderings preferred by the American Committee. In regard to the text adopted, the revisers profess to take that for which the evidence is decidedly preponderating. In this way they made a text as they proceeded, or rather selected such readings as seemed best. The wisdom of this step may be doubted. Translators and textual critics fare best when kept apart. A preferable course would have been to take one of the critical texts already made—say that of Lachmann or Tischendorf—and



follow it throughout. To encumber themselves with the task of picking out certain readings as in their opinion the best seems unnecessary. Those who have spent long years of labour over the formation of a new text and evinced an aptitude for the work should have enabled the company of revisers to dispense at once with text-formation. As it is, they have not constructed a text equal in value or excellence to that made by any one of the prominent critical editors since Griesbach and Matthæi.

Another feature of the new book is the margin, which contains particulars of various import, not only alternate renderings introduced by *or*, with the literal sense of Greek words and phrases, but also notices of other readings than those adopted. The latter are expressed in general terms, such as "Many ancient authorities" or "Some ancient authorities." At other times the margin has explanatory remarks, as at Luke v. 37, where the rendering "wine-skins" is annotated, "That is, skins used as bottles." The margin is furnished with too much matter. The expressions "Many" and "Some ancient authorities" are too vague to be of real use. The alternate renderings are also too many. None but such as are *nearly equal* to those in the text should be given. The volume contains not a few that deserve no place there.

The use of the italics should have been dispensed with in the translation. Whatever words are necessary to express the Greek original should have been given without indicating, or rather trying to indicate, necessary additions to the original when it is carried over into the English language. Quotations from the Old Testament are printed in the same type with the rest of the text. Those from the poetical books are arranged in parallel lines, and so are the hymns in the first two chapters of Luke's Gospel. We prefer italics for marking citations.

The first rule laid down by the Committee of Convocation, viz., "To introduce as few alterations as possible into the text of the Authorised Version consistently with faithfulness," has been followed with considerable fidelity. We expressed our regret many months ago that the revisers had made alterations in the wording of the Lord's Prayer. At the same time, there is no doubt that their reading "the evil *one*" is the correct translation.

The titles of the books of the New Testament as given in the version of 1611 are unchanged. This is a defect, for the heading of the Epistle to the Hebrews, which assigns it to the Apostle Paul,



is undoubtedly incorrect. No modern scholar except Von Hofmann has ventured to maintain the Pauline authorship of a letter so Alexandrian in spirit. The revisers have properly discarded the summaries of chapters usually prefixed, as well as the notices at the head of pages or columns.

Some passages once assumed to be parts of the original text are necessarily omitted, as 1 John v. 7, about the three heavenly witnesses; the words relating to the troubling of the pool by the angel in John v. 3, 4; Acts viii. 37, relating to the eunuch's baptism by Philip; and Luke xxiii. 17. John vii. 53—viii. 11 is put in brackets; Mark xvi. 9-20 has a marginal note attached.

The reader who takes up the work will be immediately struck with the many improvements it presents. The result of ten years' revision and re-revision, conducted by more than two dozen individuals, could hardly be other than emendation. One of these improvements is in 2 Timothy iii. 16, "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable," &c. Again, in Luke ii. 2, "This was the first enrolment made when Quirinius was governor of Syria," the correct rendering appears.

Notwithstanding the many excellences of the revised Testament, the result of careful and minute effort, it is impossible to assign it a very high standard of eminence or accuracy. In text, translation, and margin it is capable of improvement in various directions. There are needless changes, such as "*bring* us not into temptation" in the Lord's prayer; "*hell* of fire" for *hell fire*; "guard yourselves from idols"; "*my* little children;" "gained by the behaviour," &c., for *won*; "I hold not my life of any account as dear unto myself;" "make ye no ado;" "prolonged his speech until midnight;" "*at the mouth of* two or three witnesses" (a translation of ἐπι).

There are right readings and also right renderings which are not in the text. Examples of the former occur in Mark i. 1, where "the Son of God" should be omitted, and in Rev. xii. 17, where "and he stood" is read for *and I stood*. Of the latter we may refer to 2 Timothy ii. 26, where the obscure clause occurs, "having been taken captive by the Lord's servant unto the will of God;" to John iii. 3, "born anew," for *from above*; and to Matthew vi. 27, "stature," for *age*. In Colossians ii. 18, "dwelling in" is not exact, neither is the marginal rendering, "taking his stand upon." The marginal and textual renderings should often change places, as

in the case of "devils" (text), "demons" (margin), and "Comforter" (text), "Advocate" (margin). In Colossians ii. 15 both text and margin are capable of correction.

The prepositions might have been used more consistently. When *διὰ* relates to prophecy it is translated both *by* and *through*, chiefly the former. In Matthew i. 22 it is *through*; in ii. 5 *by*. *Through* should stand in all such cases. The division into paragraphs is susceptible of improvement in different places. Thus in the second chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians the first fifteen verses should run together, without the sixth and seventh being put into a short paragraph. Several instances of neglect occur in italicising English words which have no equivalents in Greek; for example, "having blotted out the bond written in ordinances that was against us" (Colossians ii. 14), where *written* is supplied.

It is impossible to congratulate the translators on their treatment of the difficult passage in Philippians ii. 6. The rendering of it is not accurate; and the marginal annotation "being originally," assigned to the Greek *ἐν μορφῇ*, is surely wrong. The laboured notes of Bishop Lightfoot fail to make out this meaning. Nor is the version of Hebrews xi. 1 altogether happy, though it is important to put forth the sacred writer's definition of faith as accurately as possible. "*The proving* of things not seen" fails to hit the exact sense of the Greek word, which occurs elsewhere only in 2 Timothy iii. 16. Though the Vulgate has *argumentum*, i.e., proof, *conviction* is nearer the true meaning. The definite article, too, should be absent from the nouns *assurance* and *proving*. The marginal rendering, "test," for the latter, is no better than itself. The textual rendering of 1 Thess. iv. 14, "Them also that are fallen asleep *in Jesus* will God bring with Him," is unsuited to the original; but the margin exhibits the true sense. Neither is the punctuation of Romans ix. 5 to be approved. Lachmann and Tischendorf properly put a full stop after *κατὰ σάρκα*. The latter's critical note, giving all the evidence fairly, is a contrast to the corresponding note in Dr. Tregelles's edition, where dogmatic prepossession is betrayed. The ordinary reading of Acts xx. 28 is retained, probably because the two oldest MSS. have it. Notwithstanding these external witnesses, the reading "church of the Lord," adopted by Griesbach, Lachmann, and Tischendorf, is preferable. Much, indeed, has been written to show that "the

church of God" should be considered the original, and "the church of the Lord" a derivative; but "the blood of God" is a strange expression in the mouth either of St. Paul or St. Luke, and savours of a later time. The notes of De Wette and Tischendorf, are conclusive on the behalf of "the Church of the Lord."

Several of the recommendations of the American Committee might have been adopted with advantage. The general excellence of the suggestions of the American revisers is undoubted, and they ought not to have been so often neglected.

Judged from the scholar's point of view, the version is superior to the old one because it follows a better text, and corrects many inaccurate renderings. What is most obvious is the small amount of material change. A conservative spirit pervades it. Perhaps this was a prudent measure on the whole, when we consider the sensitive orthodoxy of the English Church, or rather of those members whose influence was paramount among the revisers at the beginning, middle, and end. But might not one scholar of proved competence belonging to that same Church have done as much within ten years? Probably, indeed, he would have thought it waste of time to spend those years on the homœopathic revision of a venerable translation. Yet the volume, with all its shortcomings will do good, exorcizing from the minds of many simple people the notion that the old version is infallibly inspired. It is a step in advance, preparing the way for a new and independent translation from another critical Greek text.

#### GRAMMATICAL ERRORS IN REVISED VERSION.

Mr. G. Washington Moon, author of "The Dean's English," remarks:—"One passage is as follows:—'Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth *and* rust *doth* consume' (Matt. vi. 19). . . . The revisionists should have said, 'Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust consume,' not '*doth* consume,' for that is saying '*they doth*!' . . . In Matt. xxvii. 56, I read 'Among whom *was* Mary Magdalene, *and* Mary the mother of James and Joses, *and* the mother of the sons of Zebedee;' i.e., those three *was* among them! This is culpable carelessness; for, in the parallel passage in Mark xv. 40, it is said 'Among whom *were* both Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less, and of Joses and Salome.' If two Mary's

are plural, how can three Mary's be singular? I was going to say that it is a singular error, but, unfortunately, it is not so, for there are others like it; see Acts xvii. 34, where it is said, 'Among whom also *was* Dionysius the Areopagite, *and* a woman named Damaris, *and* others.' In Mark iii. 33, I read, 'Who *is* my mother *and* my brethren?' Who *is* they! Carelessness again, for the parallel passage in Matt. xii. 48, gives the inquiry grammatically, thus: 'Who *is* my mother, and who *are* my brethren?' The preface says, respecting parallel passages, 'Where, as in the case of the first three Evangelists, precisely the same clauses or sentences are found in more than one of the Gospels, it is necessary to translate them in every place in the same way.' In Rom. ix. 4, I read of the Israelites, 'Whose *is* the adoption, *and* the glory, *and* the covenants *and* the giving of the law, *and* the service of God, *and* the promises.'" You see it says that all these things *is* theirs! Yet in the very next verse it correctly says, 'Whose *are* the fathers?' How can these errors be explained? I confess that I am more than puzzled by them, when I reflect that the work is the result of ten years' study. Again, in Eph. iii. 18, I read, 'That ye may be strong to apprehend with all the saints what *is* the breadth, *and* length, *and* height, *and* depth, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge.' It certainly passeth knowledge why the revisionists should have sent forth such English as this. In the passage quoted there are four things mentioned; and the revisionists speak of our being strong to apprehend what *they is*! We should need to be 'strong,' indeed to 'apprehend' why *they is* spoken of in this *singular* manner. The revisionists say in the preface, 'We have acted on the general principle of printing in italics words which did not appear to be necessarily involved in the Greek.' That being so, the word '*was*,' in Heb. ix. 4, is indisputably their own; and I ask them to explain its presence there. The passage is, 'Wherein *was* a golden pot holding the manna, *and* Aaron's rod that budded, *and* the tables of the covenant,' &c. These things *was* there. And more: In James iii. 10, I read as follows—'Out of the same mouth *cometh* forth blessing *and* cursing.' To which I say, 'Doth they?'

## *Literary Notices.*

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[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

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### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

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THE DOUBLE COLLAPSE OF CHARLES BRADLAUGH, M.P., IN TWO  
DEBATES WITH THE REV. J. LAWSON. London: Simpkin  
and Marshall; and Wade & Co.

It has often been questioned by men of sterling piety and great ability whether platform debates do any real good, calculated, as they must be, in the excitement of public speaking to produce bitterness and ill-feeling not only between the combatants, but also between the antagonistic parties in the audience. Still it is sometimes necessary to engage in such controversies, if only to show that Christian truth can hold its own in a fair fight against all comers. To a written debate—and this is one—the above named objection does not apply, at least, not with anything like the same force. Mr. Lawson is an able and popular Congregational minister at West Hartlepool, and has twice debated with Mr. Bradlaugh. The first time on the question, “Has Man a Soul?” and the second on whether “Atheism is the True Theory of the Universe.” The two debates, which took place at an interval of some years, are issued in the volume before us, which comprises something like 160 pages, and is sold at one shilling. Regarding the result of the discussion, there cannot be two opinions. Mr. Lawson is not only an acute reasoner, but he is also a profound thinker, and well versed in metaphysics. We recommend our readers to procure these able debates,



THE CROSSING SWEEPERS: OR, WEE STAN AND LITTLE LLEW, A TALE OF ORPHAN LIFE. By Mrs. W. OLDING. London : Eliot Stock, Paternoster Row.

This little book will not only win its way by the charm of the story, but will touch many a young heart by its tenderness and its truthfulness. There is much power in one or two of the conversations which are exquisite in their naturalness, and their gentle religiousness. Children's books, in our day, are almost as plentiful as primroses. Yet there does not seem to the little folks to be too many of either. This is one of those books that have the freshness of spring flowers on them, and so are sure of a welcome.

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THE HUMAN RACE, AND OTHER SERMONS. By late REV. FREDERICK ROBERTSON, M.A. Second Edition. London : Kegan, Paul, & Co.

It is now some years since "The Homilist" called the attention of its readers to the first volume of sermons which appeared bearing the name of Frederick W. Robertson. This was, we understand, one of the first, if not the first, literary notices of the works of this remarkable man. It was so enthusiastically appreciated that Captain Robertson, the father of the illustrious author, addressed to the Editor a beautiful letter of grateful acknowledgment. Amongst the many very pleasing experiences which we have had during a somewhat long editorship, this reminiscence is one of the most fragrant. "The Homilist," which recognised in the first volumes a man of distinguished genius, inspired with the divine thought and sympathy, and endowed with didactic attributes of the highest order, recognises in this volume the same lofty characteristics. The Editor of this volume (who has the honour of being his son) says in his preface "The great majority of these sermons composing the present volume, are taken from the outline or skeleton draft which my father usually prepared before delivery, but of which a few specimens only have been preserved. It will be seen by the preface to the fourth series that it was originally intended to publish them as 'Pulpit Notes,' but in arranging them for the press, I became

convinced that if the volume were to be rendered sufficiently complete for purposes of home reading, it would be impossible to print the notes in all cases exactly as they stood. On the other hand, it was evident that additions of any kind would deprive the notes of much of their suggestiveness and concentrated force; and the question thus lay between the danger of limiting the practical usefulness of the sermons themselves and that of lowering the literary reputation of their author. On reflection I decided to encounter the latter risk, but at the same time to guard against it as far as possible by this explanation of the manner in which the notes have been treated. While adhering, therefore, with scrupulous fidelity to the text—no syllable of which has been either altered or omitted—I have, in certain instances, partly filled up the skeleton by supplying such unimportant words as seemed requisite to complete the sentence, or render the sense at once intelligible to the hearer if the sermon should be read aloud. It is hardly necessary to add that in no single instance has a whole sentence been interpolated.” This volume will, undoubtedly, attain what it deserves, a circulation equal to its predecessors.

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LAYS OF ROMANCE AND CHIVALRY. By W. STEWART ROSS  
London: Stewart & Co., Holborn Viaduct Steps.

Here are twenty-one short poems, some founded on old historic facts, and some on legendary incidents, many of which are of tragic interest. These are stated at the head of most of the compositions. It requires a poet to interpret and appreciate a poet, and as we are unconscious of the mystic faculty and fire, we hesitate to pronounce judgment on such works. Albeit these “Lays” seem to us breezy with the breath, radiating with the fires, and redolent with the melodies of those who dwell on the divine heights of Parnassus.

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BIBLE TRAGEDIES. By RICHARD HENGIST HORNE. London:  
Newman & Co., 43, Hart Street, Bloomsbury.

The prefatory note to this book may serve to show the nature and purpose of the work. “The early Christian apologists anathematised the Greek mysteries, but no sooner did Christianity become the faith of the civilised world than—as Mr. Maccoll has pointed out, attempts were made to vivify the faith of the early converts, and enlist new proselytes by means of dramatic represen-

tations. Hence sprung up the mystery and miracle plays, and the moralities which for ages nurtured the piety and instructed the minds of the rude people to whom books could not speak, and in whose ears the sermons of the churchmen were but the windy ethics of the Schools. Wyckliffe and his followers launched fulminations against them. But Martin Luther, whose robust mind saw in them an effective aid to his propaganda, gave them his sanction on the ground that 'such spectacles often do more good and produce more impression than sermons.' Hence, throughout Sweden and Denmark they were long popular: and even up to the close of the 16th, and beginning of the 17th, centuries, when Elizabeth, James I., and Charles I. often witnessed them, they flourished in England. To this day their influence may be seen in the Cornish acting of 'St. George and the Dragon,' and 'Beelzebub.'" The tragedies consist of John the Baptist; or, the Valour of the Soul—Rahman; the Apocryphal book of Job's wife—and Judas Iscariot, a mystery. Concerning the last the author says, "It had frequently occurred to me that the story of Judas Iscariot contained elements of a tragedy of a more terrible kind than could be developed from any other event in history; but for the first idea of attempting it, I am indebted to an Ordination Sermon delivered by the late Archbishop Wateley. It was printed at the earnest request of many priests and deacons." The conception of the work is original, and the execution displays a Scriptural knowledge, a discernment of character, a dramatic faculty, and a poetic genius of no mean order.

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KANT AND HIS ENGLISH CRITICS. A COMPARISON OF CRITICAL AND EMPIRICAL PHILOSOPHY. By JOHN WATSON, M.A., LL.D. Glasgow: James Maclehose, St. Vincent Street.

"In this work," says the learned author, "an attempt is made to point out the misconceptions of its real nature that still prevent Kant's theory of knowledge from being estimated on its merits, notwithstanding the large amount of light recently cast upon it, and to show in detail that the *Critique of Pure Reason* raises, and partially solves, a problem that the English Empirical Psychology can hardly be said to touch." The headings of the various chapters of this book, of which there are twelve, will reveal its contents and explain its purpose: The Problem and Method of the Critique of Pure Reason—Mr. Balfour's Criticism of the Transcendental Method—The *Æa priori* Conditions of Perception—Mr. Sidgwick's

View of the Refutation of Idealism—The *a priori* Conditions of Knowledge in General—The Categories and Schemata—Relations of Metaphysic and Psychology—Examination of G. H. Lewes Theory of Knowledge—The Principles of Judgment—Dr. Stirling's Interpretation—Proof of the Principles of Judgment—Objections to Kant's Proofs of Substantiality and Causality Examined—The Metaphysic of Nature—Comparison of the Critical and Empirical Conceptions of Nature—The Distinction of Noumena and Phenomena in Kant and Spencer—Imperfect Development of Kant's Theory of Knowledge—Examination of Kant's Distinction of Sense. There are but few even of the reading and studious classes who are interested in such abstruse subjects as are discussed in this volume ; and fewer still even of those who write on such subjects possess the necessary qualifications. Dr. Watson shows himself in every page fully equal to the task he has undertaken, and has produced a volume classic and authoritative on Kantian philosophy.

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THE DOCTRINES OF ANNIHILATION AND UNIVERSALISM. By REV. THOMAS WOOD. London : Wesleyan Conference Office, City Road.

We are glad to receive a second and enlarged edition of this work, in which the doctrines of Annihilation and Universalism are exhibited in the light of reason, analogy, and revelation ; in which also we have some critical notes and a review of " *Salvator Mundi*." Although we cannot regard a deep concern for our future as an element of Christly piety, but otherwise (for we are to "take no anxious thought for the morrow," and if there were no future, our obligation to love supremely the Supreme One with all our hearts, would be as binding as ever), and though we have always felt a repugnance both to the doctrine of eternal suffering and annihilation, we have yet a high appreciation of this work. It states in a clear, scholarly, and Catholic way the principal points of the great controversy, and that with a profound respect for orthodox interpretations of Scripture. The writer's criticism on " *Salvator Mundi* " shows that he is able to measure swords with the able author of that book. As a defence of the orthodox doctrine we know of nothing better. It is controversial, but free from acrimony ; decisive, but not dogmatic. "Prove all things."



## *Leading Homily.*

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### GOD IN THE ASPECT OF A COMFORTER.

“FOR, WHEN WE WERE COME INTO MACEDONIA, OUR FLESH HAD NO REST, BUT WE WERE TROUBLED ON EVERY SIDE; WITHOUT WERE FIGHTINGS, WITHIN WERE FEARS. NEVERTHELESS GOD, THAT COMFORTETH THOSE THAT ARE CAST DOWN, COMFORTED US BY THE COMING OF TITUS; AND NOT BY HIS COMING ONLY, BUT BY THE CONSOLATION WHEREWITH HE WAS COMFORTED IN YOU, WHEN HE TOLD US YOUR EARNEST DESIRE, YOUR MOURNING, YOUR FERVENT MIND TOWARD ME; SO THAT I REJOICED THE MORE.” 2 *Cor.* vii. 5-7.

**I**NORASMUCH as God does not present Himself to the eye, does not address the ear, and does not submit Himself to be touched, in short, is a Spirit, we are more or less in danger of entertaining the notion that He and the world are nothing to each other. That He has to do with the world and its affairs is not matter of observation, like an eclipse, a fall of rain, or the flow and ebb of the tide, but matter of reasoning and reflection. The continuance of the system of things of which we form a part, and the carrying out of the moral and physical



acts of His intelligent creatures into their natural issues, are proofs that God is no uninterested spectator of what goes on in this lower world, but that He charges Himself with its preservation and government. According to the author of the epistle to the Hebrews, "all things are naked and open unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." Literally it is "with whom is our account," and what is true of us is true of all other creatures, sentient and insentient. Of His own will God concerns Himself with us, and to an extent of which we have no proper conception. His relation to us as our Creator, and therefore as our Proprietor, renders it fitting that He should take to do with us, to say nothing of His infinitely glorious character, in virtue of which He does all the good possible, in one world as well as another. More than the (human) "heart and flesh crieth out for the living God." What is there of God's making that does not? And to whom is this known, if not to God Himself? The want of God is universal, and what should we think of God if, knowing this, He were to proceed on the principle of denying Himself and His services to all classes of His creatures? It would be impossible to think favourably. What is the teaching of the Bible on this subject? Does it teach that the world and God stand apart from each other like two monuments in a city or a cemetery? Certainly not. On the contrary, it teaches throughout its pages that God has to do with the world, and all that it contains. He preserves and rules it; and He alone is possessed of the necessary qualifications. They are utterly mistaken who speak of the world, or a single object in it, as abandoned by God, as nothing to Him. That is not the view of God brought under

notice in the text, or the view of God held by the great Apostle of the Gentiles. If he had conceived of God as giving Himself no concern about men and their doings, especially as giving Himself no concern about His own children and their experiences of life, he would not, after telling us in verse 5 of "the great fight of afflictions," which He and Timothy had to endure in Macedonia, have added: "Nevertheless God that comforteth," &c. Paul's belief was that "the eyes of the Lord were upon the righteous, and his ears open unto their cry," and that, guided by the knowledge which He had of their circumstances, His hand was continually working in their behalf; and a belief of this kind must have been "meat and drink" to Him. It never occurred to him to trace the deeds of persecutors to God, or blame Him for their hatred and opposition to the Gospel and its friends, but he traced whatever good fell to his lot to God as its ultimate source. He was not one who rested in second causes, and it would be well if his example in this respect were followed by the Christians of the present day. To rest in second causes is always as unphilosophical as it is injurious. "Nevertheless God that comforteth," &c.

In the "Biblical Museum," the text is felicitously divided by Comper Gray into four heads, and in further discoursing upon it, it is my intention to avail myself of his divisions. We have then (1) the *ailment*: "cast down;" (2) the *Patient*: Paul; (3) the *Physician*: God; (4) the *Remedy*: comfort. I begin with:—

I. The AILMENT. "Cast down." Contact with persons in a dejected state of mind is not pleasant. We are apt, through the operation of the law of sympathy, to be similarly affected; and when this occurs,

departure from their presence gives a sense of relief. We part from them glad that their dejection is not ours, and conscious of a wish, if our hearts be full of the milk of human kindness, that a change for the better may soon take place in them. Assuredly the dejected are not objects of envy; and it would be strange if they were, for what is dejection? It is a condition of mind made up of three elements—weakness, sorrow, and despondency; and each of them is an undesirable element. Such elements, instead of attracting, repel. No dejection at all is preferable to even a little. This the dejected as a class readily admit, but the difficulty is to protect ourselves from dejection amid the changes to which we and all the things that surround us are liable. There is much to cast us down—to *floor* us as we go on through life. The young may call this in question, but those who have lived any length of time in the world yield a ready assent to the statement. The causes of dejection are sometimes beyond control, and sometimes not. To remove it when, *e.g.*, it originates in a diseased state of the body is the work of the skilful physician: mere talk is useless. So long as the cause remains, it will operate, but it often springs from causes over which we have no control. Not a few are cast down without sufficient reason. If they were to take in the truth, and the whole truth, their experience would be different. Sickness has a tendency to cast us down, bereavement has a similar tendency, so have poverty and the pressure of difficulties. So have recurring losses, disappointments, and dangers. Unless we fortify ourselves against them, they are sure to have a discouraging and depressing effect. Unkind criticisms and contemptuous treatment, accidents to, and folly in

those whom we love, tend to cast us down, as does also the thwarting of our plans time after time, whether designed to promote our own interest or the interest of our neighbours. But be the causes what they may, the cast down are undoubtedly ailing ones. This is the light in which they see themselves, and are seen by others. Who would not rather have the consciousness of strength, joy, and hope, than be weighed down by weakness, sorrow, and despondency? Notice—

II.—The PATIENT—Paul, and to his name may be added that of Timothy. Dejection was experienced by both during their stay in Macedonia, where they had to contend with “fightings without” and “fears within.” Ah! it is little wonder that the sea of troubles which kept surging over them had a damping influence upon them. Dejection is not only an ailment but a *common* ailment. What proportion those who are down in spirit bear to those who are up I cannot tell. God alone knows, but dejection is not confined to the unbelieving and the wicked. They do not enjoy exemption from it, and other things being equal, they are oftener and more easily cast down than those of an opposite character. Satiety, ennui, and lowness of spirits haunt the terminus of vice. Not many of any class or country are in a position to testify that they have never known what it was to be cast down. Fortune must have been very indulgent if much has not happened to make us low in spirits, or feel weak, sad, and despondent. Most of us have had our moments, hours, days of dejection, and if it has not lasted longer, we ought to be the more thankful. The unconverted have not a monopoly of dejection. It is a frequent experience with the people of God, more perhaps on

account of others than their own account. Paul knew what it was to be cast down, so did Timothy, so did all the Apostles, and there has been a continuance of dejection all along the Christian ages up to the present time. It is not peculiar to Christians to be cast down, but they are not exempt from the feeling of dejection. At the time that Titus joined Paul and Timothy in Macedonia they were in need of comfort, and when I read the words, "Nevertheless God that comforteth those that are cast down" &c., I realise two things: (1) That Paul and Timothy were human, like ourselves, and (2) That their condition on earth was not essentially different from our own. It depended on the course which things took, whether their feeling would be one of depression or elation. When things were bright and promising they were elated; when they were dark and threatening they were cast down. Hence it is unreasonable to expect that all our lives we shall be strangers to dejection, and when it visits us, we ought not conclude that it is any evidence that God is offended with us. If Paul and Timothy had been less concerned than they were about the spread of the Gospel, the opposition which they met with in Macedonia would have sat lighter upon them. Notice—

III. The *PHYSICIAN*—God. "Nevertheless God," &c. Whence came the trouble of which Paul and Timothy had experience in Macedonia? From men, and this answer is not inconsistent with the lines of the paraphrase—

" Though trouble spring not from the dust,  
Nor sorrow from the ground,  
Yet ills on ills by heaven's decree,  
In man's estate are found."



Where sin is, there is trouble, and there trouble ought to be. If any one were to say that the trouble from which Paul and Timothy suffered in Macedonia came from the devil's hand, I should not object, because a favourite mode with him of inflicting trouble on the servants of God is the *indirect*. He employs man as his tool. Accordingly Paul thus writes to the saints in Rome, "And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." Whence came the comfort referred to in the text? The ailment was trouble, the remedy was comfort. Who was the physician? It was God. "Nevertheless God," &c. This was Paul's account of the matter, and there is every reason why we should accept it as philosophically correct. In what a beautiful aspect God is here presented! I would that He were oftener thought of as a Comforter, the Comforter of those that are cast down. Parents have much to do in the way of comforting their children, and a prime comforter a mother is. She knows as it were by instinct how to soothe a suffering child, whether the seat of it be the little hand, or head, or heart, and God has a great deal to do in the character of a comforter. Imparting comfort forms no inconsiderable part of His work, and it is work in which He takes pleasure. There is such a thing as false comfort, but with that God should not be associated. From all that is false God stands farther off than the east is from the west; but He is the source of all the true comfort which men experience. If it come directly, He is the source of it; if it come indirectly or in a circuitous way, He is still the Source of it. This must have been Paul's idea, otherwise he would not have thus expressed himself,

“Nevertheless God that comforteth us,” &c. Is a gift the less a gift from me that I send it by a messenger or through the post? Paul and Timothy were no doubt tempted to think that God did not know, or did not care, that they were in trouble, or that he was unable to help them, but they did not yield to the temptation, and it was fortunate that they did not. Such thoughts are from beneath, and never should be entertained. It is for God to determine when and how to comfort His suffering children. That He will, in His own time, may be regarded as a certainty, for He is the Comforter of them that are cast down. As a Comforter He never failed the apostles. The more tribulation that man’s or Satan’s hand put into the one scale, the more comfort God put into the other. Listen to their testimony, “Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them who are in any trouble by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.” Indeed, so far as the giving of comfort to Christians is concerned, God has undergone no change since the days of the Apostles. When they are in a fit state to receive it, comfort comes, sooner or later, and whether it come directly or indirectly, they should connect God with it. It was by *the coming of Titus* that God comforted Paul and Timothy; and not by his coming only, but by the good tidings which he brought with respect to the Corinthians, their ardour for Paul, their sorrow for all the wrong which they, as a Church, had tolerated and done, and their zeal in a good sense for Paul personally, and for

the cause which he represented. But that did not hinder Paul from tracing the comfort which flowed into his heart, in connection with the arrival of Titus on the scene, and the intercourse which he had with him, up to God. He looked beyond Titus. Titus was but the channel, God was the Fountain-Head, or the efficient cause, and if he had not associated God as Physician with the cure of the ailment, Paul would have been the more to blame that, as John Howe remarks, "It is our own thoughts that must always be the immediate ministers either of our trouble or comfort, though as to the latter, God only is the supreme Author. It is God that comforts those that are cast down, but He does so by their own thoughts being employed to that purpose, and not without them." God permitted the trouble which came upon Paul and Timothy in Macedonia, and He sent the comfort which followed in due course, and it pleased Him to send it in the person of Titus.

If when trouble comes upon us in the service of Christ and His gospel, comfort is to be our portion, it is to God we must look. Paul recognises no comforter of the cast down except God, and it is of no practical importance how comfort is sent, whether directly or indirectly. If the latter method be chosen, let us rise above the messenger to God Himself. He is truly designated "the God of all comfort," and what comfort it should give us in the hour of trouble, which is not of our seeking or bringing to pass, to remember that it is He that "Comforteth those that are cast down!" Notice:—

IV. The REMEDY—Comfort. "Nevertheless God that comforteth them . . . comforted us," &c.

Trouble is anything which weakens, disturbs, or dispirits. Comfort is anything which increases strength, heightens joy, or enlivens hope. This is substantially the meaning which we attach to it when we call the bounties of Providence "creature-comforts," when we describe a house as comfortable, and when parents pronounce a son or daughter a comfort to them.

Comfort is thus the cure for trouble, and the coming of Titus was an instance of its application. The comfort would not be all on one side. This is not probable, but there is no mention of the comfort which Titus derived from a renewal of intercourse with Paul and Timothy. We are simply told that his timely arrival operated comfortingly on the minds of Paul and Timothy. It was attended by an increase of strength, joy, and hope. It may not have been the intention of Titus to comfort them, but this was the effect produced, and not unnaturally, considering that he was the bearer of gratifying intelligence concerning the Christian Church in Corinth. The coming of Titus did not put a stop to the persecution in progress, but it did what was equivalent—it fitted them for the heroic endurance of it, and nerved them anew for the conflict with ignorance, error, and evil. The "grace" which Paul received was tantamount to the plucking out of the thorn in his flesh. To supply me with money to pay a debt is equivalent to cancelling or forgiving it. In a word, the coming of Titus comforted, strengthened, and cheered Paul and Timothy, and did them the more good that they traced the comfort to its right source—God.

It is recorded of Rachel that, refusing to be comforted, she went on sorrowing for her dead children, but Paul and Timothy acted differently. They wel-

came with grateful hearts the comfort which, in the wise and watchful Providence of God, came to them. And this is the course which, when trouble assails us, we should adopt. Whatever comfort God sends, though it should be only a crumb, and by whomsoever it may be conveyed, we should thankfully accept, and share to the fullest extent with others. "I will not leave you comfortless" (orphans), was Christ's promise to the disciples, and it has been fulfilled in the experience of Christians in all ages and lands. There is no comforter to compare with God, and He delights to act the Comforter. Indeed, all comfort worthy of the name proceeds from Him, and we should aspire to be workers together with Him in the department of comfort. We should avoid increasing the trouble that is in the world, but do our best to apply the remedy for it—comfort. Titus was not equal to Paul, and yet he was the chosen channel of comfort to him. All of us can make ourselves of some use as comforters. We work in the line of that Spirit (one of whose names is "the Comforter") when we endeavour to comfort our sisters and brothers; and they can never be themselves without comfort who give comfort to others.

*Belfast.*

GEORGE CRON.

"But Thou wilt heal the broken heart,  
Which like the plants that throw  
Their fragrance from the wounded part  
Breathes sweetness out of woe.

"Then sorrow, touch'd by Thee, grows bright  
With more than rapture's ray,  
As darkness shows us worlds of light,  
We could not see by day."

*Moore.*



# The Preacher's Homiletical Commentary.

## HOMILETIC SKETCHES ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

**OUR PURPOSE.**—Many learned and devout men have gone *Philologically* through this *TEHELIM*, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volume; within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough *HOMILETIC* treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

**OUR METHOD.**—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1) *THE HISTORY* of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2) *ANNOTATIONS* of the passages. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase or allusion that may occur.—(3) *THE ARGUMENT* of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4) *THE HOMILETICS* of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts and indicate such sermonizing methods as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

No. CLX.

### The Workings of the Eternal Will.

“WHEN ISRAEL WENT OUT OF EGYPT,” &c.—Psalm cxiv. 1-8.

**HISTORY:**—The date and author of this Psalm are unknown. It is marked by characteristic brevity, force, rapidity, intense faith, personification of natural objects, and by choice of a subject, the miracles of Exodus exclusively, which suggest a very early date. These miracles of Exodus are frequently referred to by the Psalmist and the Prophets. It is hard to imagine any hypothesis, except the truth of the grand

events alluded to, which could have led to such an echo of them throughout all generations of Jews.”—*Canon Cook*. The glowing picture of the deliverance from Egypt would no doubt represent the thoughts and feelings of the newly restored captives from Babylon.

**ANNOTATIONS:**—Ver. 1. “*When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob, from a people of strange language.*” The Greek and Latin versions

render this, "barbarous" and "foreign" languages. The language of Egypt was a strange and barbarous language. Hence Joseph in Egypt spoke to his brethren by an interpreter (Genesis xlii. 23), and a difference of language existed from the beginning of their intercourse.

Ver. 2.—"*Judah was his sanctuary.*" Shiloh was in Ephraim, and Gibeon in Benjamin. Zion was taken by David, was annexed to Judah, and became a permanent sanctuary. "*Israel His dominion.*" "The idea here is that God, by His miracles in Exodus, purchased for Himself an inheritance."—*Canon Cook.*

Ver. 3-7.—"*The sea saw it, and fled; Jordan was driven back.*" What a grandly poetic representation we have here and in the three following verses of the agitation of nature! "*The sea saw*" God in His majestic presence and power; "*and fled,*" a poetical description of its dividing, to let the people pass over. "*Jordan was driven back.*" Turned backward. These two events opened and closed the migration of the people. "*The mountains.*" The tops

of the range of mountains on which the law-giving took place. "*The hills,*" the adjacent heights, "*skipped like rams.*" A poetic description of the concussion caused by the thunder and lightning that accompanied the divine presence. "*What aileth thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest?*" The scene is still before the mind of the poet. As there has been no mention of God by name, the question is highly pertinent in poetic style. The various objects of nature are personified. "*Tremble.*" The answer is put in the form of an admonition. "*Before the Lord,*" the Governor of the universe of nature. "*The God of Jacob,*" who is one in His essence as well as universal in His power. "*Who turned,*" &c. There is no greater demonstration of creative power than turning the rock into a fountain of water, and none in nature more beneficent. "*The flint.*" A term contrasting the hardness of the rock with the softness of the water.—*Dr. Murphy.*

ARGUMENT:—This is a poetic celebration of God's power both over mind and matter in conducting the children of Israel out of Egypt into the land of Promise.

HOMILETICS :—The whole Psalm may be taken as an illustration of the *workings of the eternal will*. God has a WILL. He does not move automatically, or by a blind Omnipotent instinct, but by an intelligent and sovereign will. He doeth all things after the “counsel of His own will.” The universe is but His will in form and action. It is the primordeal, the propelling and presiding force of all forces and motions. The Psalm leads us to look at this *Eternal will* in two aspects—

I. As acting on MORAL MIND. In the deliverance of the Jews from Egyptian bondage, it acted both on the Egyptian mind and on the Hebrew mind. First: This will acted on the *Egyptian mind disastrously*. The whole mind of Pharaoh and his host were in strong opposition to the exodus of the Jews. “Who is the Lord that we should obey Him?” This was its attitude. But that mind was terrified, overcome and overwhelmed by the Divine will. It acted, we say, disastrously. Whose fault was this? Not God’s. (1) Man can resist the Divine will. Herein is his distinguishing power. He can either fall in with it, or resist it. This power is the grand characteristic and glory of his nature. This binds him to moral government, and renders him accountable for his conduct. (2) His resistance is his ruin. To go against the Eternal will is to go against the laws of nature, the current of the universe, the eternal conditions of well-being. It is a thousand times more ruinous than to go against the express train in the height of its velocity. Acquiescence to the Divine will is heaven, resistance to the Divine will is hell. “Bring hither those mine enemies that would not have me to rule

over them," &c. Alas, is not the Eternal will now resisted amongst men? "Ye do always resist the Spirit." Are not those who resist everywhere ruining themselves? Secondly: This will acted on the *Hebrew mind remedially*. (1) It brought Israel out of Egypt. Unless the Divine will had influenced the teeming multitudes of the chosen tribes, there would have been no effort to follow Moses, no effort to break away from their thralldom. (2) It brought Israel in blessed relationship to God. "*Judah was his sanctuary, and Israel his dominion.*" The term "*sanctuary*" is elsewhere (Psalm lxxviii. 54; Exodus xix. 6) applied to Palestine, and Palestine was a land where the theocracy, the residence, and the reign of God was established. By coming out of Egypt, Israel came into the special presence and special superintendence of God. Thus ever, those who follow the Divine will, will enter into Canaan; in other words, will come into close fellowship with the source of all blessedness. The Psalm leads us to look at the Eternal will—

II. As acting on MATERIAL NATURE. "*The sea saw it and fled, Jordan was driven back.*" Here the "*sea*," "*Jordan*," "*mountains*," "*little hills*," and the "*flinty rock*," are poetically represented as moved by the Divine will. The sea fleeing, the river reversing its course, the massive "*mountains skipping like rams*," the flinty rock pouring out "*fountains of waters*." Though there is, perhaps, the exaggeration of poetry in this, it is historic fact (see Exodus xix. 4, and Exodus xiv. 21; Joshua iii. 16; see also Heb. iii. 3-6). Two remarks we make concerning the action of the Divine will on material nature. First: It is always *effective*. Whatever result is purposed in material

nature is accomplished by a volition. God has only to will a material phenomenon, and it occurs, "He spake, and it was done." Mountains shall leap from their rocky foundations, oceans shall divide, rivers shall reverse their courses, and the laws of nature alter their action, should He so will. Nothing in material nature comes between His will and the result purposed. Not so in moral mind. Secondly: Its action on matter is *philosophically exciting*. "*What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan that thou wast driven back?*" The motions of matter are constantly exciting the philosophic in the human soul—the element of inquiry. Would that philosophy would not pause in its inquiries until it traced all the forms and motions of matter to the Eternal will! It was that will that was now working in the mountains, in the hills, and the rocks. Thirdly: Its action on matter is sometimes *terrific*. "*Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord.*" How often men are terrified by the action of the Divine will on the material world! When strange comets sweep the heavens, when the oceans overflow their boundaries, when volcanoes rive the mountains, when hurricanes bear devastation over sea and land, when loud thunders make the earth to tremble and the hills resound, men stand in awe, they tremble "*at the presence of the Lord.*"

CONCLUSION.—Realise God's will in all, both in mind and matter. He who says that all is God is a Pantheist, and ignores the Divine personality. But he who believes that God is all, is a Christian theist, for He is all, and all in all, the Cause, Proprietor, Means, and End of all things but sin.



# HOMILETIC GLANCES AT THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN.

[As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form of Sermonic Outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are:—"Introduction to New Testament," by Bleek; "Commentary on John," by Tholuck; "Commentary on John," by Hengstenberg; "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," by Westcott; "The Gospel History," by Ebrard; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon; "St. John's Gospel," by Oosterzee; "Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Dorner, Lange, Sears, Farrer, etc., etc.]

No. CXXV.

## The Apostolic Community.

"I HAVE MANIFESTED THY NAME UNTO THE MEN WHICH THOU GAVEST ME," &c.—John xvii. 6-8.\*

EXPOSITION:—Ver. 6. "I have manifested." Εφάνέρωσά *"Thy name."* Thy holy character. *"Unto the men which (whom) Thou gavest me out of the world."* Christ here regards His Apostles as a body separated from the world, and entrusted to His spiritual care. *"Thine they were and Thou gavest them to me."* "The meaning of these words is that they were morally prepared by the earlier manifestation of God for the fuller manifestation

in Christ. They were God's in more than name, and therefore when Christ was revealed to them, they recognised Him of whom Moses and the prophets did speak (Compare chap. i. 37)."—*New Testament Commentary, by Bishop Ellicott.*

Ver. 7. *"Now they have known that all things whatsoever Thou hast given me are of Thee."* Christ here asserts what they had just before attested. "Now we are sure (know we) that Thou knowest

\* "I manifested Thy name unto the men whom Thou gavest me out of the world: Thine they were and Thou gavest them to me, and they have kept Thy word. Now they know that all things whatsoever Thou hast given me are from Thee: for the words which Thou gavest me I have given unto them, and they received them and knew of a truth that I came forth from Thee, and they believed that Thou didst send me."—*Revised Version.*

all things, and needest not that any man should ask Thee" (chap. xvi. 30). He acknowledges their faith, feeble as it was.

Ver. 8. "*For I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest me, and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send me.*" "From their perception of the absolutely divine character of His word, they had risen to that of the divine origin of His person and of His mission. These sayings also breathe that sentiment of inward joy and lively gratitude which Jesus had

but a few moments since experienced; for it was but quite recently that the glorious result for which He gave thanks to His Father had been obtained (xvi. 29-31). The harvest seemed undoubtedly scanty: eleven Galilean peasants after three years' labour! But it is enough for Jesus, for in these eleven He beholds the pledge of the continuance of God's work upon earth. "*They have received,*" upon the authority of My testimony; "*they have known*" by their own moral discernment; "*they have believed,*" by the surrender of their whole being."—*Godet.*

HOMILETICS:—Christ here states two great facts in relation to the *apostolic community*, the college or training school which He had established for the diffusion of His doctrines and Spirit. A school infinitely superior to the schools established by Epicurus or Zeno, or by any other philosopher of ancient or modern times. He states the fact—

I. That THEY WERE GIVEN TO HIM BY THE FATHER. "*I have manifested Thy name unto the men whom Thou gavest me out of the world. Thine they were, and Thou gavest them me.*" What is the meaning of these words? The answer by a certain—and, alas, a popular school of theology, is—that far back in the "counsels of eternity" (as the phrase is) the Absolute One gave over to Christ a certain number of human souls to be saved, on the

condition that He would become their Substitute, and endure all the penalties attached to the laws which they had broken. This is called the covenant of redemption. I confess that such a covenant I have been unable to discover in any part of the sacred writings, and it seems to me derogatory to the Infinite Father of souls, who Himself is love. It is a mere theological fiction, a fiction, I fear, that has wrought immeasurable spiritual mischief. Whatever is meant by God giving men to Christ, it cannot mean the three following things :

FIRST: It cannot mean that men are so given to Christ as to interfere in any measure with their perfect freedom as responsible beings. To give a man is to give a being whose very essence is freedom. Take away his liberty of action, and you take away his humanity ; and at best he is a mere animated machine, he is not a man. SECONDLY: It cannot mean that men are so given to Christ as to lessen to the smallest extent God's claim upon them. When we, in good faith, bestow any object unconditionally on another, we sink our claim to it ; the thing given is no longer ours, it is the property of the recipient. God's claim to the supreme love and service of all moral intelligences can neither be abrogated or lessened. THIRDLY: It cannot mean that men are given to Christ in such a way as to render their salvation absolutely certain. The expression—"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me," has been so interpreted as to favour this absurdity. If the Father has given them to Christ they shall come to Him, it matters not where they live, when they live, or how they live ; they shall come. But the very language of Christ in the context shows that such an idea as this is inadmissible to the last

degree. If their salvation is certain, why does Christ here pray for them? Why does He say, "Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given me?" Moreover, why does He say that Judas, who had been given Him, was lost, and had become the "son of perdition?" Denying all these ideas, I can attach a sublimely impressive meaning to these words; *Christ, as the Model of piety, ascribes everything He has to His Father.* It is the instinct of piety to trace all things up to the primal source—God. Indeed, even sufferings He regarded as the gift of God. The political power of Pilate to condemn Him He regarded as the gift of God. "Thou couldest have no power to condemn me, except my Father gave it." The cup of suffering He drank in the garden of Gethsemane He traced up to His Father as His gift. "The cup which my Father has given me shall I not drink?" Christ traced everything, but sin, up to the Father. He says, "All things are given unto me," "All power is given unto me." Piety always does this. A Church has been deprived of its minister, another has come to occupy his place whom the Church considers pre-eminently suitable, the piety of the Church says God has given us another pastor. A godly man is in great distress, a man visits him in his sufferings who heartily sympathises with him, alleviates his anguish, and removes his burden, and he says, God has given me a friend. The words of Christ must, therefore, be taken not as the language of theology, but as the natural expression of the highest piety. "God is all in all." Christ states the fact—

II. THAT THEY ARE BELIEVERS IN THE FATHER THROUGH HIM. "*They have believed that Thou didst send me.*"

First: They believed in the Father so as to obey His will. "*And they have kept Thy word.*" "Though it is still necessary that they should be sifted, they have stood the main test, and have not suffered themselves to be entangled in the apostacy of Judas. To Christ's eyes they do already issue victorious out of temptation (see chap. viii. 51)."—*Lange*. Secondly: They believed in the Father so as to accept Christ as His Messenger. "*For I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send me.*" They were led to regard Christ as the Administrator of the Father's blessings and the Revealer of the Father's character. Through Christ they heard the Father, they saw the Father. "*Have known surely that I came out from Thee.*" They were thoroughly convinced of this fact.

CONCLUSION:—Profoundly interesting are those facts connected with the members of that training school which Christ established, a school which teaches the sublimest doctrines which can engage the thoughts of men, and the most elevated ethics, congruous at once with reason and with conscience; ethics embodied in a spotless life. Oh! that all men were disciples in this school! "There is but one apostolic Christianity, and none besides; whoso will not have that has none. That unity of the Father and Son is, therefore, not simply a type, but a true and effective *cause* of the oneness of Christianity. If the Church of Christ stood forth as a harmonious community of brethren, where nought but order and love ruled, it would be so unique a phenomenon that every one would be forced to acknowledge that here was divine work. All doubts as to, and accusations against, Christianity must perforce hold their peace."—*Heubner*.



## Sermonic Saplings.

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### A SONG OF DEGREES (1) A GOOD MAN WITH BAD NEIGHBOURS.

[REMARKS ON THE FIFTEEN PSALMS ENTITLED, "THE SONGS OF DEGREES."—This Psalm is called a Song of Degrees, and so are all the Psalms from this to Ps. cxxxiv. inclusive. They are thought by some to have been chanted by pilgrims returning from exile at Babylon; by others to have been written at various periods, for pilgrims making the periodical journeys with song and music (Isa. xxx. 29; Genesis xxxi. 27), to Jerusalem commanded by the law (Deut. xvi. 16), and by early tradition to have been written for chanting upon the fifteen steps which led from the court of the women to the court of the men in the Temple. They were probably put into their present form after the exile, to which, as of recent occurrence, there are many allusions. As a collection, they served like Ps. xc., c., ci., cvii., cviii., cxviii., for special occasions and uses. The following are characteristics of nearly all these Psalms: sweetness and tenderness; a sad, pathetic tone; brevity; an absence generally of the ordinary parallelism; and something of a quick, trochaic rhythm."—*Canon Cook*. We insert Sketches on Psalms in this place as we are anxious to conclude our work on the Psalms this year.]

"IN MY DISTRESS I CRIED UNTO THE LORD," &c.  
*Ps. cxx. 1-7.*



OME suppose that this Psalm was occasioned by the rebuilding of the Temple, and the establishment of the people at Jerusalem (Ezra iii.; Neh. ii. 4-6). Others suppose that it has no such national reference, but is purely an individual experience. However, it scarcely mat-

ters. We will make a few exegetical remarks on the verses at the outset. "*In my distress I cried unto the Lord, and He heard me.*" The experience of Jonah (ii. 2), answers to this, and is expressed almost in identical language. "*Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue.*" The "*lying lips,*" perhaps, was the cause of his distress. Some say the reference is here to Doeg's spitefulness (1 Sam. xxix. 9). Others to the slanderous conduct of the Samaritans in relation to the Jews in their letter to Artaxerxes (Ezra iv. 11-16). Others to the treacherous conduct of Sanballat and Tobiah (Neh. vi. 1-19). "*What shall be given unto thee? or what shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue?*" "What shall He give to thee, and what shall He further give to thee, thou crafty tongue?"—*Delitzsch*. Perhaps the meaning is, What recompense can you expect from the God of righteousness for your malignant calumnies? "*Sharp arrows of the mighty.*" The punishment corresponds to the nature of the tongue, which is described as a sharp sword (Psalm lvii. ; Jer. ix. 7), and described by James as a fire (James iii. 6). "*With coals of Juniper*"—coals of broom. These coals retained their heat for a long time, thus the punishment of the slanderous tongue is most appropriate. It is a sword, and shall be punished by the sword; it is a fire and shall be punished by the fire. "*Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar.*" "Mesech is here placed in conjunction with Kedar, and is probably the Mash of Genesis x. 23, who is, in 1 Chron. i. 17, called Meshech. As Meshech is a son of Aram, and Kedar a son of Ishmael, it is natural they should come into contact somewhere on the borders of

Israel. To dwell among these Arab wanderers therefore, would be a great trial to one who loved Zion.” —*Dr. Murphy.* “*My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace. I am for peace: but when I speak, they are for war.*” His neighbours were quarrelsome, but he was pacific. This Psalm presents to us *a good man with bad neighbours.* Whoever is the author of the Psalm he represents himself as a good man. He had prayed, and his prayer had been answered, and in the last verse he says that whilst his neighbours were for war he was for peace. But his neighbours were distinguished by two great evils—slandering tongues and querulous tempers.

I. SLANDERING TONGUES. “*Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips and from a deceitful tongue.*” Slander is a common and a very pernicious evil. “How frequently,” says Sterne, “is the honesty and integrity of a man disposed of by a smile or a shrug! How many good and generous actions have been sunk into oblivion by a distrustful look, or stamped with the imputations of proceeding from bad motives, by a mysterious and seasonable whisper. Look into the companies of those whose gentle natures should disarm them, we shall find no better account. How large a portion of chastity is sent out of the world by distant hints, nodded away, and cruelly winked into suspicion, by the envy of those who are past temptation of it themselves. How often does the reputation of a helpless creature bleed by a report, which the party who is at the pains to propagate it, beholds with much pity and fellow-feeling—that he is heartily sorry for it—hopes in God it is not true; however, as Archbishop Tillotson wittily observes upon it, is resolved in the meantime to give the

report her pass, that at least it may have fair play to take its fortune in the world—to be believed or not, according to the charity of those into whose hands it shall happen to fall.” It is implied here First: That the slanderous tongue was terribly painful to the author of the Psalm. “*What shall be given unto thee, or, What shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue?*”

(1) He speaks of it as “*sharp arrows of the mighty.*” Shakespeare well describes slander—

“’Tis slander

Whose edge is sharper than the sword. Whose tongue  
Outvenoms all the worms of Nile; whose breath  
Rides on the posting winds, and doth belie  
All corners of the world, kings, queens, and states,  
Maids, matrons; nay, the secrets of the grave  
This viprous slander enters.”

(2) He speaks of it as a *fire*. “*Coals of Juniper.*” So St. James speaks of it. “The tongue of the slanderer,” says Massillon, “is a devouring fire, which tarnishes whatever it touches; which exercises its fury on the good grain, equally as on the chaff; on the profane as on the sacred; which wherever it passes, leaves only desolation and ruin; digs even into the bowels of the earth, and fixes itself on things most hidden; turns into vile ashes what only a moment before appeared to us so precious and brilliant; acts with more violence and danger than ever in the time when it was apparently smothered up and almost extinct, which blackens what it cannot consume, and sometimes sparkles and brightens before it destroys.” It is implied here, Secondly: That the slanderer deserves appropriate punishment. “*Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of Juniper.*” This is supposed by some to be

an answer which he puts to the question—“ *What shall be given unto thee?* ” It seems to me that thou shalt have what thou hast given—the poignant anguish of the “ *arrows of the mighty* ;” the torturing agonies of the fire ; “ *the coals of Juniper* ,” of fire that shall burn intensely and long. “ With what measure ye mete it, shall be measured to you again.” Slander is a terrible evil, and it shall be met with terrible punishment. Alas, every good man must have lived in a neighbourhood where there are neighbours who have slanderous tongues.

“ The world with calumny abounds,  
The whitest virtue slander wounds ;  
There are whose joy is, night and day,  
To talk a character away ;  
Eager from rout to rout they haste,  
To blast the generous and chaste,  
And hunting reputation down,  
Proclaim their triumphs through the town.”

The other evil by which the writer's neighbours were distinguished was

II. QUERULOUS TEMPER. “ *My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace ; I am for peace ; but when I speak they are for war.* ” There are in most neighbourhoods those of irascible, choleric, petulant tempers, always ready for angry wrangling and disputation. Like a tinder box they only require a spark to produce an explosion. Shenstone says, “ I consider you very testy and quarrelsome people in the same light as I do a loaded gun, which may, by accident, go off and kill one.” Dr. Johnson has said in relation to a man of this temper that, “ If he has two ideas in his head they would fall out with another.” What are you to do with people of this irascible make ? Do not contend with them, do



not return their spiteful and malignant utterances. As well endeavour to quench the lightning with a spoonful of water. As God made such tempers they have their use. Out of them come the severe critic, the inflexible censor, the savage warrior, the denunciatory preacher. On the contrary, show them kindness. Though much may depend upon their physical organisation, the querulous spirit may be exorcised from them, may be utterly overcome. Such reformatations have been effected, and Christ's gospel of kindness, mighty for that purpose, will one day turn all such natures into love. "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them."

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## A SONG OF DEGREES (2) THE GOOD IN TIME OF NEED.

"I WILL LIFT UP MINE EYES UNTO THE HILLS," &c.  
*Psalm cxxi.* 1-8.

THIS Psalm was sung, it may be, as the pilgrims were going up from their various districts to Jerusalem, although some imagine that the writer was in banishment when he wrote the poem, and it is an outburst as he looked, with longing eyes, towards his native hills. Three things are here presented to us in connection with the good man in the time of need:

I.—THE ATTITUDE of a good man in time of need.  
"*I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills.*" The hills

here are undoubtedly those on which Jerusalem was situated. "Beautiful for situation is Mount Zion, the joy of the whole earth." The attitude of a truly godly man in time of need—and on this earth he is often in need—is that of looking up, gazing God-ward. In the margin the verse is a question, "Shall I lift up mine eyes to the hills? whence should my help come?" First: God is the only true help of the soul. He alone can raise it from its fallen condition, break its fetters, heal its wounds, energise its faculties, and set it on a course safe and prosperous. Secondly: To Him the godly soul instinctively looks in trial. The worldly man in trial looks to earthly things for succour and support, to social sympathies, to human friendships, to Church officers, but the good man turns at once to God, feels that from Him alone the necessary help can come. To whom can I go? "My heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God." Notice—

II.—THE PROTECTOR of a good man in time of need. Who is He? First: He is the universal Creator. "*My help cometh from the Lord which made heaven and earth.*" Heaven and earth mean the universe—all things. No less than the Maker and Manager of worlds is the Protector of a godly man. "God is our refuge and strength," &c. Secondly: He is a sleepless guardian. "*He will not suffer Thy foot to be moved.*"

"May He ne'er yield thy foot to slide,  
His watch unsleeping o'er thee keep."—*Keble.*

"*He that keepeth thee will not slumber.*" Sleep means weariness. "The mighty God fainteth not, neither is weary." We are never out of His sight;

neither darkness or distance can place us beyond His watchful eye. "The eyes of the Lord are in every place." "A poor woman, as the eastern story has it, came to the Sultan one day, and asked compensation for the loss of some property. "How did you lose it?" said the monarch. "I fell asleep," was the reply, "and a robber entered my dwelling." "Why did you fall asleep?" "I fell asleep, because I believed that you were awake." The Sultan was so much delighted with the answer of the woman, that he ordered her loss to be made up. But what is true, only by a legal fiction, of human governments, that they never sleep, is true in the most absolute sense with reference to the Divine government. We can sleep in safety, because our God is ever awake. We are safe because He never slumbers. Jacob had a beautiful picture of the ceaseless care of Divine Providence, on the night when he fled from his father's house. The lonely traveller slept on the ground with the stones for his pillow, and the sky for his canopy. He had a wondrous vision of a ladder stretching from earth to heaven, and on which angels were seen ascending and descending. And he heard Jehovah saying to him, 'Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest.'"—*Dr. MacMichael*. Thirdly : He is the all-sufficient. "*The Lord is thy keeper, the Lord is thy shade upon Thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day nor the moon by night.*" He is thy "*shade.*" He comes between thee and the burning rays of a tropical sun : and between thee and the freezing rays of the cold moon. Notice—

III.—The CONFIDENCE of a good man in time of need.

"*The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil, He shall*

*preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.*" This is an expression of the strong confidence of the good in the time of need. "Lawyers, when they are drawing up important documents, frequently conclude with some general terms to meet any emergency which may possibly occur. They do this on the principle, that what is not in may be supposed to be intentionally left out. In order to guard against this inference, they are not content with inserting a number of particular cases: they conclude with a general statement, which includes everything, whether expressed or not. A similar formula is inserted here. It is of great importance, that the feet of travellers be kept from sliding, as they pursue their journey. It is of great importance, that they be preserved from heat by day, and from cold by night. But other dangers await them, from which they require protection, and lest the suspicion be entertained, that no provision is made for these being surmounted, they are all introduced in the saving and comprehensive clause. No matter what may be their character, no matter from what quarter they may appear, no matter when they may come, and no matter how long they may continue, the declaration covers them all. Divine grace changes the nature of everything it handles, and transforms everything it touches into gold. Afflictions are overruled for good, and the virtues of the Christian life are developed with unusual lustre." "The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil."

"Fear not the windy tempests wild,  
 Thy bark they shall not wreck:  
 Lie down and sleep, O helpless child,  
 Thy Father's on the deck."

# A SONG OF DEGREES (3) A PIOUS PATRIOT.

“I WAS GLAD WHEN THEY SAID UNTO ME, LET US GO INTO THE HOUSE OF THE LORD,” &c. Ps. cxxii. 1-9.

THERE is no authority whatever for ascribing this Psalm to David. In the principal versions his name is not mentioned as the author, nor do its contents authorise the belief. Evidently the author of the poem was one of a company of pilgrims overflowing with joy and admiration. The Psalm as a whole presents to us a pious patriot rejoicing in the opportunity of assembling for public worship, highly appreciating the various advantages of his country, and earnestly desiring the prosperity of his fatherland. Here is a pious patriot—

I. REJOICING IN THE OPPORTUNITY FOR ASSEMBLING FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP. “*I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.*” The writer recalls to mind when some friends or neighbours first called on him proposing that they should go up to Jerusalem for worship, the thrill of joy with which he welcomed the proposition. And still more when he reached the scene. “*Our feet shall stand,*” or have come to stand, “*within thy gates, O Jerusalem.*” With what rapture he stood within the sacred gates! The words remind us of, First :—*One of the grandest social duties of religious men.* What is that? To invite their neighbours to religious worship. The most essential means of spiritual discipline, and the highest delights of the human soul are in social worship. All other social exercises compared to this are as clouds without water, or as the morning dew, that soon passes away. Herein is the highest fellowship; souls gathered



around one object, centred in one object, adoring one object, and that one object the Supreme Good, and Necessity. Ah me ! were those who call themselves religious, earnestly and rightly engaged in this work of inviting the millions to the house of God, not only would all existing churches soon be crowded, but new temples would rapidly be multiplied. The words remind us of, Secondly : “ *The delight that may be expected from the right discharge of this duty.* “ *I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.*” Where was the “ *house of t're Lord ?*” The temple was not built, it was on Mount Moriah, where rested the Ark of the Covenant, the symbol of the Divine presence. “ *The House of the Lord,*” is not a human building, nor a particular locality ; but the whole earth, the whole universe is the house of God. “ *Neither in this mountain nor that,*” &c. “ *God is a Spirit,*” &c. Whoever invited the author of this poem to assemble for social worship must have felt themselves amply rewarded for the effort by the rapturous response which they received. “ *I was glad.*” In all souls there is a crying out “ *for the living God,*” and were such an invitation rightly given to the masses it would receive in numberless instances, a welcome prompt and exultant. Here is a pious patriot,

II.—HIGHLY APPRECIATING THE VARIOUS ADVANTAGES OF HIS COUNTRY. “ *Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together : whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord. For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David.*” First : He rejoices in it because it was a scene of material beauty. “ *Jerusalem is builded*

*as a city that is compact together.*" Perhaps the special reference here is to the rebuilding of the city after the captivity, and the rejoicing felt when the pilgrims saw it rise from its ruins into completeness again. "It is said that the idea of compactness especially impresses travellers in regard to Jerusalem. Standing on a rocky plateau, enclosed on three sides by deep valleys, the city is all gathered, as it were, into that space; it fills the space, but does not extend beyond it." Secondly: He rejoices in it because it was the scene of religious worship. "*Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord.*" Thither the people went to receive instruction from the Almighty, and to render Him worship. Thither they went at the great feasts in obedience to the Divine command (Exodus xxiii. 17, Deut. xvi. 16). Thirdly: He rejoices in it because it was the scene of civil justice. "*For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David.*" This means simply that Jerusalem was a civil as well as a religious capital. Here disputes between men were taken and settled on the principles of justice. Justice was dealt out with an even hand between man and man. True social worship and civil justice always go hand in hand: the courts of justice are in vital alliance with the courts of worship. Formal worshippers are often tyrants, genuine worshippers are ever just. Here is a pious patriot—

III. EARNESTLY DESIRING THE PROSPERITY OF HIS FATHERLAND. "*Pray for the peace of Jerusalem, they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companion's sakes I will now say, Peace be within*

*thee. Because of the house of the Lord our God I will seek thy good.*" First: He invokes for it the highest good. "*Peace and prosperity.*" In truth real prosperity includes peace, for where there is not peace between the soul and God, as well as between man and man, there can be no true prosperity, either physical or mental. The advance of general intelligence, the progress of civilisation, the accumulation of wealth, the extension of empire, what are these without true *moral* peace? Castles in the air, bubbles on the stream. Secondly: He invokes for it the highest good for the strongest reasons. (1) Here is a *personal* reason. "*They shall prosper that love thee.*" By seeking the good of the whole we best insure our own prosperity. (2) Here is a *social* reason. "*For my brethren and companion's sake I will now say, Peace be within thee.*" This agrees with Paul's prayer. "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved" (Rom. x. 1). A prayer of a true patriot this! (3) Here is a *religious* reason. "*Because of the house of the Lord our God I will seek thy good.*"

CONCLUSION:—"Shall we not also rejoice when we are summoned to God's house? Though there is no longer one visible temple in which the faithful may meet for worship, our separate scattered churches recall the great spiritual temple of the Holy Catholic Church, into which are gathered God's servants of all ages and countries. With what goodly fellowship we associate ourselves when we come to stand before God in His house. What can we do at such times, but pray for the peace and prosperity of the Church, and pledge ourselves in every possible way to seek to do her good?"

# A SONG OF DEGREES (4) THE DEVOUT SUFFERING SOUL.

“UNTO THEE WILL I LIFT UP MINE EYES, O THOU THAT DWELLEST IN THE HEAVENS,” etc. *Ps. cxxiii. 1-4.*

THIS Psalm leads us to look at two things in relation to a devout suffering soul—

I. THE ATTITUDE OF A DEVOUT SOUL. “*Unto Thee will I lift up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in the heavens. Behold as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress: so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God until that He have mercy upon us.*” What is the attitude? First: Up-looking, “*Unto thee will I lift up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in the heavens.*” “Physically, man is the only being on earth upon whom the Creator has conferred an erect countenance, as if his very physical formation were intended to teach him that his eyes should be raised towards the skies, and that he should hold intercourse with Him who dwells in heaven. Other animals look down upon the ground, their faces are bent towards the earth. Man is God-like, erect, with native honour clad. The heathen themselves recognised this seal of divinity on the brow of man, and in the beautiful language of the Greek, the word ‘man’ describes him as a being whose honour it is to look up.” But *mentally* so conscious are we of dependence on God that even the worst of men are forced at times to look up to Him in the heavens. “From Him alone cometh our help.” This is the regular attitude of a devout soul, looking up to the Infinite. Is there a more sublime mood of being than this? The millions are looking down to worldly things and worldly plea-

tures, and the highest objects on which most look are the little social magnates of the hour. But the true soul looks up to the Infinite Father. What is the attitude? Secondly: Up-looking for a practical purpose. "*Behold as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress, so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God.*" "The hand is the symbol of power, by the slave's eyes being turned towards his master's hand is meant that he watches carefully for the least intimation of his will. Or the hand may be taken as the instrument of giving, and the reference may be to the slave's absolute dependence on his master. Or it may be the chastising hand that is meant: as the slave looks with entreaty to his master deprecating punishment (Isaiah ix. 15), so the Psalmist's eyes are turned wistfully to God, until He have pity. The tone of the Psalm, however, indicates hopeful trust rather than humble submission. The future of His people is entirely in His hands: He will be sure some day to have mercy on His own."

II. THE NEED OF A SUFFERING SOUL. "*Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us,*" &c. "Some suggest the circumstances narrated in Neh. ii. 19; iv. 1-5, as suitable to the composition of this Psalm: others prefer the times of persecution under Antiochus Epiphanes: others again suggest, on the grounds of similarity of language, common authorship with Psalm cxx." What is the need of a suffering soul? Mercy. "*Have mercy upon us.*" This is ever the need. Mercy to calm, succour, strengthen, guide, and deliver.

CONCLUSION:—"This Psalm is a lesson of meekness. When we are fancying ourselves scorned or forgotten, what have we to do but to look up to God and entreat His favour? It is pity for ourselves, and not vengeance on our foes, that we would seek. At the same time we must be ready to obey like slaves waiting for some token of their master's will."



## *Germes of Thought.*

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### THE PREACHER'S FINGER-POST.

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#### Graduality and Divinity of Human Salvation.

“AND THE LORD ADDED TO THE CHURCH DAILY SUCH AS SHOULD BE SAVED.” — *Acts* ii. 47.

THE day of Pentecost was marked by three things: a new manifestation of the Divine Spirit, a new style of religious ministry, and a new development of social life.\* One great result of all this on that day is here recorded. Dean Alford's version of the words is, “The Lord added to their number day by day them that were in the way of salvation.” Dr. Samuel Davidson's version we think better: “The Lord

was adding to the Church daily those who were being saved.” The authors of the New Testament Revised Version have adopted Dr. Samuel Davidson's translation, and read, “the Lord added to them day by day those that were being saved.” Not those that had been saved, or those who would be saved, but those who *were being* saved. The words in their connection teach two great facts in relation to man's salvation.

I. IT IS GRADUAL IN ITS PROCESS. The popular impression is that this great event is instantaneous. But the nature of the

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\* See my Homiletical Commentary on the “Acts,” *in loco*.

work and the testimony of the Scriptures give no sanction to such an impression. Consider, First: *The nature of the work.* Salvation may be said to involve a twofold change, a change in condition and a change in character. (1) A change in *condition*. The soul is represented as *lost*, it has lost its normal condition and its original character. Its normal condition was the fulfilment of its mission, answering the end for which it was created. Popularly we say a thing is lost when it is missed. Thus the sheep in the parable that wandered from the fold was lost, the owner knew not where it was, or whither it had gone. The piece of silver also was in this sense lost; the woman knew not where it was, she had to light a candle to search for it. We say, too, a thing is lost when it is

utterly destroyed; the house burnt to ashes is lost; a vessel that is gone down and buried in the depths of the ocean is lost. But the human soul is not lost in either of these senses; God knows where it is every moment of its existence; it is not destroyed, its essence is in all probability imperishable. We say that a thing is lost in another sense, viz., when it has failed to realise the object for which it was produced. Thus a chronometer is lost when it becomes incapable of keeping time; a vessel is lost when it is unfit any more to plough the ocean; a family portrait is lost when all the lineaments are so discoloured or defaced as to be incapable of giving any faithful idea of the subject. In this sense the soul is lost; it does not answer the end of its existence. It involves (2) A change in *character*.

We often say of a man when his character is gone that he is lost. The son who is trained up in virtue and religion is felt by the loving father to be lost when he gives himself up to the sensual, the impure, and the ungodly.

Whether you consider salvation as consisting in the restoration of a lost condition, or a lost character, *graduality* is implied. The chronometer cannot be restored at once, nor can the unseaworthy vessel be repaired at once, nor can the injured painting be made at once to glow and beam in an image true to the original. Skilful and persistent effort in all cases of restoration is required. It is so with the soul. The rebellious does not become obedient at once, the malign benevolent at once, the selfish generous at once. The same in relation to character. Character is

not something formed at once. Character is made up of habits, and habits are made up of numerous repeated actions. Moral character is not a thing imparted to man, not a thing bestowed—it is a thing produced, and the production is a gradual process. Consider, Secondly: *The testimony of the Scriptures*. Is not graduality implied in the following statements? “Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.” “With the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” “He has appointed us unto the obtaining of salvation.” “Work out your salvation with fear and trembling.” “Kept through faith unto salvation.” “Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.” “He that shall endure to the end shall be saved.” “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou *shalt* be saved,”

not that thou *art* saved at that moment. The various figures employed to represent the Christian life indicate the same graduality. It is a building, a planting, a race, a fight, &c. It is time for this truth to be brought out with more prominence and power in our pulpits. To tell sinners that they have only to believe what was done for them in a distant country 1800 years ago, and they are saved, that the burden of their guilt is gone, and that they are made fit for the skies, is not only a philosophic absurdity that insults human reason, but a pernicious dogma that imperils human souls and caricatures the teachings of the New Testament. Another fact here concerning salvation is:—

II. IT IS EFFECTED BY GOD THROUGH THE INSTRUMENTALITY OF PREACHING. It is said, "*The Lord added.*" He did it, but

*how?* Everywhere in nature He works by means. He could effect His ultimate purposes undoubtedly by mere fiat without any instrumentalities, but this He does not. "Even so, Father," &c. The means. He employed here was Peter's sermon, and that sermon, if you analyse it, you will find consisted of no dogmas, such as "forensic justification," "personal election," "final perseverance," "legal substitution," but of *facts*, facts connected with *One Personality*, viz., Christ, His crucifixion, His burial, His resurrection, His ascension, and His dispensation of the Spirit on this occasion. He preached the Gospel. Paul, in writing to the Corinthians, says, "I declare unto you the Gospel." What was the Gospel he declared? That Christ died for our sins, that He was buried,

that He rose the third day according to the Scriptures. This is the Gospel, and not human theologies. The telling out of this wonderful story by men who have felt its power, and whom it has transformed into the Christly Spirit, the telling it out rationally, faithfully, tenderly, with profound reverence and awe as in the sight of God. This is the means by which God effects human salvation. Christ is the Gospel, and the Gospel preached is Christ exhibited.

CONCLUSION: — First: Infer not from this that salvation does not imply a crisis. There is a point when everything begins. There is a point when the dead seed receives the first touch of life. The heavy clouds charged with electricity reach a point when they flash into flame and break into thunder. There is a point

in disease when it either becomes incurable or yields to a restorative touch, and we say the disease has taken a turn. It is so with the salvation of the soul. Conversion is a turn, repentance is a turn, regeneration is a turn. "Repent and be converted every one of you." But the mere turn is not salvation; the starting point is not the goal; incipient germination is not fruitage. The mariner may turn his barque from the direction of a northern port to a southern port, and yet the southern port he may never reach. The seed may germinate, yet not only never produce fruit, but never rise into light and foliage.

Secondly: Infer not from this that other elements apart from the Gospel may not contribute to human salvation. Wholesome literature, philosophic truths, scientific



facts, and rational speculations we disparage not these, they may render important service, but they cannot do the work of the Gospel, they cannot save souls. Put the best seed into the best soil, let the choicest showers come down upon it, and the most genial airs breathe about it. It will never spring to life without

something else, they are useless without the sun. Add to them the sun, and the work is done. Add to all the elements of nature the sun, and it will start majestic forests on the barren hills. So with the Gospel. Add to all other truths, natural and moral, the gospel, and they will render service, but not otherwise.

### Divinity Working in the Unions and the Separations of Man.

"THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD CAUGHT AWAY PHILIP THAT THE EUNUCH SAW HIM NO MORE, AND HE WENT ON HIS WAY REJOICING," &c. *Acts* viii. 39, 40.

Divinity is the Alpha and Omega of all things, in all and through all. Man's tendency to ignore this, the grandest of all facts, is at once the effect and evidence of his moral fall. The student of material nature ranges through the domains of

scientific inquiry, discovers elements and forces, but sees no *divinity*. So the student of human history studies the events of men and nations, inquires into the causes of epochs and revolutions, and sees no God; he traces all to human thinkings, and passions, and plans. Albeit *divinity* is everywhere. These thoughts are suggested by the narrative of Philip.

and the Eunuch of which the text is a part. Here we see *divinity bringing men together, separating men from one another, and doing both for beneficent ends.* Here we see—

I. **DIVINITY BRINGING MEN TOGETHER.** We find here two men of different countries, different blood, different conditions, brought together. The Eunuch was a man of Ethiopia, of great authority under Candace, Queen of the Ethiopians. He was entrusted with the treasures, and mayhap with the secrets, of her kingdom. He was most probably a Jew by proselytism, and had, like Jews from every part of the world, left for a time his home to attend the great religious festivals in Jerusalem. Philip was a practical believer in Christ, had just been elected by the young Church as one of its

deacons. He was called by the Spirit to be an evangelist and to go from place to place preaching the gospel. These two men differed widely in circumstances ; Philip was without wealth, social status, or political power, prosecuting his evangelic journey under a hot sun, over dusty roads, and on foot. The Eunuch was wealthy, high in office, great in his country's esteem, and journeying homeward, not on foot but in a chariot, supplied with all that the civilisation of the age could give to make his journey pleasant. Such are the two men who are here brought together by the divinity. How came it to pass that these two strangers should have met at Gaza, met just at the time when the Eunuch was returning, when he was engaged in that very work which was most likely to attract the

attention of this evangelist? Here is the explanation. "*The angel of the Lord spake unto Philip saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza.*" And again, "*Then the Spirit saith to Philip, Go near and join thyself to this chariot.*" It was the Spirit that did it, that brought these two men together in the chariot and in consultation on Divine Scripture. All true union of souls and true friendships must be ascribed to the divinity.

"There is a divinity that shapes our ends,  
Rough hew them as we will."

Here we see—

II. DIVINITY SEPARATING MEN FROM ONE ANOTHER. They had to part, but who parted them? "*The Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip that the Eunuch saw him no more.*" It is not necessary to suppose a miracle here ;

all that the language conveys is that Philip was impelled by a strong divine influence to leave the chariot and the Eunuch, and go on his mission. Two thoughts are suggested. First: *Their attachment was already strong.* Though their time together had not been long, their souls were so welded together as to require a Divine impulse to effect the separation. It was a spiritual attachment, an attachment existing between a loving pupil and a true teacher, between a gospel preacher and a believing hearer, for it is said that Philip "*preached unto him Jesus.*" He did this in answer to the question of the Eunuch, "*Of whom speaketh the prophet thus? Of himself or of some other man?*" Philip, instead of making any critical remarks upon the passage, or even trying to prove that it referred to

Christ, preached Christ. Christ is the solvent of all spiritual difficulties. What did Philip say about Jesus? His sermon is not, alas, reported. No doubt he exhibited the spotless purity of His character, the wonderfulness of His love, the sublimity of His disclosures, and the glory of His example. Christ brings souls together, and centralises them in Himself. Another thought suggested is—Secondly: *The separation was only bodily*. Souls thus united cannot be separated—no distance, no time, no force can do it. Indeed, bodily separation often deepens

and intensifies soul attachments. Many of those whose bodies are in the Antipodes or in the grave are dearer and nearer to us in consequence of their distance. All corporeal separations as well as unions must be ascribed to the *divinity*. It is God who unites and who separates. Here we see—

III. Divinity UNITING AND SEPARATING MEN FOR THE HIGHEST ENDS. First: The Eunuch departs with a new joy. “*He went on his way rejoicing.*” The great moral change had evidently been effected within him. His baptism was a sign of this.\* A new

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\* “And as they went on their way they came to a certain water, and the Eunuch said, See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptised? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, &c.” This passage does not teach certain things about baptism, things that may be either true or false. (1) It does not teach that baptism is an obligation. Philip does not seem even to have referred to it, still less to have urged it. It seems to have been the sudden wish of the Eunuch. (2) It does not teach that baptism is to be performed by immersion. The prepositions “into” and “out of” do not prove it, for elsewhere they are

world had been opened up to him, new fountains of feeling unsealed within him, so he goes home to Africa rejoicing. This swarthy convert returns rejoicing in the idea of preaching to his sable countrymen the *unsearchable riches of Christ*. Secondly: Philip departs to prosecute his evangelic mission. "*But Philip was found at Azotus, and passing through he preached in all the cities till he came to Caesarea.*" Thus the Divine Spirit that united and separated these men did it not only

to bless them but through them to bless undoubtedly countless throngs. Thus divinity ever works for beneficent ends. Thus all things that originate in love tend to happy issues. The whole universe sails on the sea, and is canopied by the sky of a loving divinity. Like some gallant ship bound for Elysian shores, it may at times have to encounter hostile gales and battling billows, albeit it points to sunny scenes of bliss, and shall not fail to reach them as its final haven.

"There is a power  
Unseen, that rules the illimitable world,  
That guides its motions, from the brightest star  
To the least dust of this sin-tainted mould;  
While man, who madly deems himself the lord  
Of all, is naught but weakness."

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translated to and from. If, indeed, immersion be taught here, it means the immersion of Philip and the Eunuch, for it says both went into, so that every baptist minister who baptises, acting on these words, should go under the water with the disciples. (3) It does not teach that baptism is only for believers. Verse 37 is, according to Tischendorf, Alford, Webster, Wilkinson, and Davidson, an interpolation, and therefore has no authority, and consequently the New Version omits it.



## A Common Fact and a Rare Experience.

"PRINCES HAVE PERSECUTED ME WITHOUT A CAUSE," &c. Ps. cxix. 161-164.

THESE words present to us a *common fact* and a *rare experience*.

I. A COMMON FACT.

"*Princes have persecuted me without a cause.*" From the Pharaohs in Egypt, in every country down to this hour, princes have persecuted the good. "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against His anointed saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us" (Ps. ii. 2, 3). The history of persecution and martyrdom has been, if not always inspired, sanctioned and enforced by princes. Godly kings, kings in ruling sympathy with the progress of humanity in liberty, virtue,

and religion, are the rarest characters in the annals of the race. First: Their conduct in this respect is in *direct antagonism to the Divine intention*. Providence gives men this high position, or permits them to reach it, in order that they may further the *moral* advancement of the world; the king who fails in this is no true king. Secondly: Their conduct in this respect is *gradually alienating the hearts of people from their class*. The princes and the rulers that give themselves up to festive carousings, to the pampering of their appetites, and the gratification of their lusts, to theatrical amusements, brutal sports, and to pompous pageantries, do more to sap the foundation of thrones, and to spread republicanism, than all the demagogism of the

world. The peoples are beginning to think now. The words present to us

## II. A RARE EXPERIENCE.

In the experience here represented there is First: *Reverence* for God's word.

"*My heart standeth in awe of Thy word.*" The

meaning of this perhaps is, I have a greater dread of violating Thy law, than I have of all the persecuting powers of princes or potentates. This is right, this is sublimely noble.

Secondly: *Delight* in God's word. "*I rejoice at Thy word as one that findeth great spoil.*" I

have more pleasure in Thy word than if I had won a kingdom. The word of God makes us "more than conquerors."

Thirdly: *Loyalty* to God's word. "*I hate and abhor lying, but Thy word do I love.*" The "*law*" and the "*word*" are here used as convertible terms. A

man who is lovingly loyal to truth, must "*hate*" and "*abhor*" lying. "The more we see of the amiable beauty of truth, the more we shall see the detestability of a lie."—

M. Henry. Fourthly: *Gratitude* for God's word.

"*Seven times a day do I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments.*"

Judgments here, too, means the same as "word," "law," "testimonies," "statutes" in other places. "*Seven times a day.*" Not only morning and evening, or three times a day (Ps. lv.), but seven times, that is again and again, constantly. Eternal thanksgiving for God's communications.

CONCLUSION: — What matters the persecution of princes, if our souls are thus in exultant sympathy with God's everlasting truth?

# Notes on the Epistle to the Colossians.

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REFERRING our readers for all historical and critical remarks about this Epistle to the able Commentaries of LIGHTFOOT and ELLICOTT, and FARRER'S more recent "*Life and Work of St. Paul*," it is nevertheless necessary to carry into and throughout our consideration of the entire Epistle, what was its main purpose. Throughout St. Paul is dealing with the twofold evil that had arisen in the Colossian Church—an error half Judaic, half Gnostic—an error that was theological and practical. It arose from the wrong conception of matter as inherently evil and as demanding intervening mediators between the material system of things and God; and at making abstinence from contact with material things, as far as might be possible, very incumbent on the godly. This error has its modern analogies in Sacerdotalism, and in Pietism. To combat the error then and now the *Plenitude of Christ* must be preached; Christ the fulness therefore the all sufficient Mediator, therefore too the all sufficient Consecrator of the material system. The errors of the Ritualist, and of the Recluse are both met by this great fact.

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## No. XV.

### RELIGIOUS REGULATIONS FOR MASTER AND SERVANT.

"SERVANTS, OBEY IN ALL THINGS YOUR MASTERS ACCORDING TO THE FLESH; NOT WITH EYESERVICE, AS MENPLEASERS; BUT IN SINGLENESS OF HEART, FEARING GOD: AND WHATSOEVER YE DO, DO IT HEARTILY, AS TO THE LORD, AND NOT UNTO MEN; KNOWING THAT OF THE LORD YE SHALL RECEIVE THE REWARD OF THE INHERITANCE: FOR YE SERVE THE LORD CHRIST. BUT HE THAT DOETH WRONG SHALL RECEIVE FOR THE WRONG WHICH HE HATH DONE: AND THERE IS NO RESPECT OF PERSONS. MASTERS, GIVE UNTO YOUR SERVANTS THAT WHICH IS JUST AND EQUAL; KNOWING THAT YE ALSO HAVE A MASTER IN HEAVEN." *Col.* iii. 22-25; iv. i.

THE length of the paragraph on this topic is probably partly the result of Paul's having then and there so much to do with Onesimus, the runaway slave, whom he was sending back to his master. "Bought and adopted,

and in Christ a brother, claimed and completed and in Christ a man." But besides this personal reason, Paul must have felt that there was, in the state of the Colossian society of the time, an urgent need for this

lengthy and detailed description of duty. And is there not now? Are not masters and servants in England failing in their reciprocal duties very largely, because they are expecting as Dr. Chalmers said, "Universal selfishness to do the work of universal love?" Therefore we may earnestly notice—

I. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A TRUE SERVANT'S SERVICE. It is marked by: (1) *Obedience*. Engaged for given duties: do them. Refusal to do them, neglect in doing them is immoral, is irreligious. You cannot be a good Christian and a bad servant. This obedience is marked by: (2) *Thoroughness*. Not "eye-service." This happy expression is probably the apostle's coinage. It describes obedience that is superficial, inconstant, hollow. The obedience he enjoins is marked by:

(3) *Simplicity of motive*—"singleness of heart." Not having two purposes, nor secondary aims. This obedience is marked by: (4) *Earnestness*. "Do it heartily." Whatsoever ye do, work at it. The lazy and lethargic are repulsive, the enthusiastic are noble.

II. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A TRUE MASTER'S MASTERSHIP. The duties of a master are as clearly enforced as those of the servant. "The same light attempers various colours, so the same principle regulates various duties." There is claimed from the master: (1) *Justice*. That is what the law demands, what is legally right and square. There is, however, much more: (2) *Equity*. "What is equal." Equity is more than law; more than legal claims. It is a liberal interpretation of justice in common matters; a response to the

intuition of what is right, even though no law defined it or enforced it. It was this teaching about equity that was really the insertion of the leaven that has destroyed slavery in Christendom. What is the touchstone of this equity? Surely this golden rule "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even the same to them likewise."

III. THE MOTIVES BOTH OF TRUE SERVICE AND OF TRUE MASTERSHIP. The motives put before them are two: (1) *They both sustain a common relationship to Christ.* (a) *All are His servants—* Servants, "ye serve the

Lord Christ": Masters, "ye also have a Master in Heaven." (β) *All work is done in His sight—* Therefore do it "fearing God." (γ) *All may be done for His glory.* "There is no respect of persons." (2) *Christ will rightly deal out retribution and reward.* With Christ is "the reward of the inheritance." From Christ men shall receive for the wrong which they have done. Our conclusion is First: Cherish a Christian ambition to serve well. Second: Cherish a Christian ambition to rule well.

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

Bristol.

### Masters and Servants.

"Happy those times  
When lords were styled fathers of families,  
And not imperious masters ! When they number'd  
Their servants almost equal with their sons,  
Or one degree beneath them ! When their labours  
Were cherish'd and rewarded ; and a period  
Set to their sufferings ! When they did not press  
Their duties or their wills beyond the power  
And strength of their performance."

Shakespeare.



# Seeds of Sermons on St. Paul's Epistle to Philippians.

Having gone through all the verses in the Epistle to the Ephesians (see "Homilist," Vol. xxii. to xxviii.), we proceed to develop, with our usual brevity, the precious germs of truth contained in this letter. The following remarks, as a standing introduction, may contribute some portion of light to the whole Epistle.—Notice (1) *The residence of the persons addressed.* Philippi—whose ancient name was Crenides—was a city of Macedonia, and called after the name of Philip of Macedon, because he rebuilt and fortified it. B.C. 358, and afterwards colonised by Julius Cæsar, who invested the population with the privilege of a Roman City. It was the first place in Europe where the Gospel was preached by Paul, an account of which we have in the sixteenth chapter of the Acts. It was during his second missionary tour, and about A.D. 53.—Notice (2) *The occasion of the Epistle.* The contributions which the Philippians had made towards supplying the Apostle's necessities when a prisoner at Rome, evidently prompted its production.—Notice (3) *The scene from which the Epistle was addressed.* That it was from Rome where he was a prisoner is clear, from chapters i. 1-13, iv. 22. It would seem from the Epistle that he was expecting a speedy decision of his case, and hoped to obtain his release. Epaphroditus had been despatched to him from the Philipplan Church with pecuniary contributions for the Apostle's relief, and on his return the Apostle entrusted this letter for conveyance. This would be about A.D. 63.—Notice (4) *The general character of the Epistle.* It is all but free from any censure, and breathes a warm and generous feeling through every part. The Epistle gives us the impression that the Philipplan Church was one of the most pure, consistent, and generous, of that age. About 40 or 50 years after this Epistle was written, we are informed that Ignatius, on his way to martyrdom passed through Philippi, and was most warmly received in that city.]

## No. VIII.

### SELF LOVE AND SOCIAL LOVE.

"BUT IF I LIVE IN THE FLESH, THIS IS THE FRUIT OF MY LABOUR: YEA WHAT I SHALL CHOOSE I WOT NOT," &c. (Phil. i. 22-26).

Dr. Samuel Davidson's rendering of this passage, which is as follows, is evidently an improvement on our own version.—"*But if to live in the flesh this is some fruit of work; and what I shall choose I know not. But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire towards departing and being with Christ, for it is very far*

*better: but to abide in the flesh is more necessary for your sakes. And of this I am confidently persuaded, that I shall abide, and abide with you all for the advancement and joy of the faith: that in me your matter for glorifying may abound in Christ Jesus through my presence again with you."* There are three loves in all human souls, *self* love, which concerns itself with one's own interest; *social* love, which concerns itself with the good of others; and *religious* love, which concerns itself with the claims of God. Being constitutional they are all good,

and designed to answer useful purposes in the full and perfect development of our nature. They, however, separately considered, are not of equal value. The second, social love, is greater than the first; the third, religious love, is greater than either, it underlies both, and is intended to be the inspiration and ruler of both. Society is greater than the individual, and God is infinitely greater than both. He is the ALL. Bishop Butler, if I recollect rightly, in one of his sermons on human nature, expounds the nature and relative importance of the two loves, the love of self and the love of society. These two are set forth in the text as working in the mind of the Apostle. I. Here is SELF love, DESIRING EXIT from the world. "Having a desire to depart and be with Christ which is far better." Observe two things. First: Paul's idea of the *nature* of his death. (1) He speaks of it as a departure, *anulusai*, to loose anchor (2 Tim. iv. 6). He seems to have regarded his mortal life as a vessel intended and fitted to plough the ocean, and visit distant shores, fastened and confined to the port, and death as the unfastening of all that binds it down. A sublimely elevating idea of death is this. (2) He speaks of it as being

with Christ. "To be with Christ." This mortal life he felt kept him to some extent away from Christ, and that death would conduct him more immediately to His presence, and he expresses the highest delight. What greater joy can we imagine than to be with the object of our supreme affection? For this the heart is ever craving. Death, then, does not terminate existence, but gives it more freedom and a wider range, does not take us away from the Object we love most, but conducts us more consciously into His presence and fellowship. Observe: Secondly: Paul's idea of the *advantage* of his death. "Far better." Is not the noble bark better out on the boundless sea with its sails unfurled, filled by the propitious breeze, and moving under the smiles of a sunny azure, than tied up in the dusky docks? Is it not better to gaze into the eye and listen to the living voice of the object of our chief affection than to be leagues away as a matter of consciousness? Hence Paul desired death, his self love yearned for it. So far as he himself was concerned it would be in every way an advantage.

II. Here is SOCIAL love URGING CONTINUANCE in the world.

“Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.” To promote the Gospel amongst them, and to diffuse it amongst his contemporaries was an object very dear to Paul’s heart. But he felt that if he were not to remain in the flesh but to depart into the Great Spirit realm, his power in this direction would be at an end. And this I take to be — First: A *solemn* fact. We can only serve our fellow-men while we are in the flesh. There is no proof that one of all the millions of departed saints has been able by personal agency to render any good whatever to any left on earth, however near and dear to his heart. All personal communications seem to cease at death. Secondly: A *practical* fact. This fact should influence every man to do the utmost he can to render spiritual service to his fellow-man during his life. When Paul departed, society lost the influence of his personal *presence*, and the personal presence of a good man is always most beneficent. And more, he lost his personal *agency* too, he delivered no more speeches, he wrote no more letters, his voice was hushed, his pen was stilled for ever. Earth alone is the sphere in which we can serve our fellow-men. Pious parents can

no more help their children when they are gone, pious pastors cease to serve their congregations when they have passed away. Hence any work we have to do must be done now and here. Here, then, were the two principles, the love of self and the love of society working in the mind of the apostle; one urging him to depart and the other to remain, so that he says, “*What I shall choose I wot not.*” I am in suspense. “I am in a strait betwixt two,” that is between the aspirations of the two loves.

III. Here is self love OVERCOME BY THE SOCIAL LOVE. “And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith.” “I know.” That is, it is my present feeling. The knowledge sprung from his desire, the wish was the father to the thought. On the whole, his choice was to remain. In reaching this decision he felt assured of two things. First: That he would *have trying work*. “But if I live in the flesh this is the fruit of my labour.” “If I live, my life will be one continuous labour, productive of much fruit, keeping me back from my reward, but useful to you.”—*Lewin*. He felt assured, Secondly: That he

should *render useful service*. "And continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith, that your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again." Most heartily did he desire such a joy in their faith, that they might abundantly rejoice in the continuation of his presence and work amongst them.

CONCLUSION :—Paul's experi-

ence here is sublime and exemplary. His love of self was submerged in his philanthropy, his love for his contemporaries. He sought not his own things, but the things of others. He said, "For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen's sake, according to the flesh." It is the Christly spirit, the spirit of self-sacrificing love, and this alone is genuine Christianity.

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### The Grandest of all Heroes.

"HE SHALL NOT STRIVE," &c.—Matt. xii. 19-21.

THE words lead us to consider Christ as the *Grandest of all Heroes*. Hundreds of men have appeared from age to age, who have assumed the character, and have been recognised as heroes by their race. Only few, however, deserve the name, and the best of them were most imperfect. There is one, and only One, who can be considered in the highest sense a hero, and that is Christ. In this character Christ is seldom represented. The pulpit, as a rule, treats Him as a victim, not as a victor, as an object for commiseration rather than commendation. I. As a Hero, He is ENGAGED IN THE GRANDEST OF ALL ENTERPRISES. What is it? "To bring forth judgment unto victory." Or, as the prophet said, "to establish judgment on the earth." Moral rectitude is the grand want of the world. II. As a Hero, He is INSPIRED WITH THE GRANDEST OF ALL DISPOSITIONS. How is He working out this enterprise? (1) *Unostentatiously*. "He doth not cause His voice to be heard in the street." (2) *Tenderly*. "A bruised reed shall He not break." (3) *Invincibly*. "He shall not fail or be discouraged."

# Homiletical Breviaries.

No. CCCXLIV.

## A Justifiable Hope.

"LORD, I HAVE HOPED FOR THY SALVATION, AND DONE THY COMMANDMENTS," &c. Ps. cxix. 166-168.

THESE words contain a justifiable hope. Hope is an instinct of the soul. "Thou hast caused me to hope in my mother's womb." "Man never is, but always to be blest." The face of the soul is always to the future. This gives it all the brightness that it has. When it is forced backward, it grows black with despair. There is a true hope and a false hope, a justifiable and an unjustifiable hope—the words direct us to the former. I. Here is a hope that has a justifiable OBJECT. What is the object? "*Thy salvation.*" What does the real salvation of man involve? First: Restoration to *lost holiness*. The soul was created in the image of God, that is, in moral perfection. That image it has lost, the restoration of that is salvation. The restoration of purity, love, spiritual freedom, loyalty. Secondly: The restoration of *lost usefulness*. The soul was made to be useful, to render by its true thoughts, pure sympathies, and wise counsels, service to other souls. But this usefulness it has lost. As a rule, men are injurious to each other, man is the devil of man. Salvation is the restoration of this usefulness. All souls ministering and inter-ministering to the good of one another. Now is not this a *justifiable* object of hope? This is the hope which God has set before us in the Gospel, "which is an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast, entering within the veil." "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as He is pure." II. Here is a hope that has a justifiable REASON. The reason here assigned for this hope is devotion to the right. "*My soul hath kept Thy testimonies, and I love them exceedingly. I have kept Thy precepts, and Thy testimonies, for all my ways are before Thee.*" A man who is *loyally* and *livingly* devoted to the right has undoubtedly a *justifiable* reason for "hoping for salvation." Out of this devotion will salvation flow as rivers from the fountain. From the law of mind it must come, and come in no other way. It cannot be purchased, it cannot be given, it must grow out of the soul devoted to rectitude. Christ brought salvation into the world



by bringing into play those moral forces of grace and truth that shall put away sin, and "establish judgment (rectitude), on the earth." Thus let us hope, hope for salvation, this is a hope that will always live and work in the human breast.

"Let the winds blow, and the billows roll,  
 Hope is the anchor of the soul.  
 But can I by so slight a tie  
 An unseen hope, on God rely ?  
 Steadfast and sure, it cannot fail,  
 It enters deep within the veil,  
 It fastens on a land unknown,  
 And moors me to my Father's throne."

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No. CCCXLV.

**The Glowing Testimony of the Good.**

"GREAT PEACE HAVE THEY WHICH LOVE THY LAW: AND NOTHING SHALL OFFEND THEM." Ps. cxix. 165.

I. This is the testimony of PHILOSOPHY. Moral remorse, malign passions, dark forebodings, battling impulses, these are the source of all inner tumult: but in the nature of the case, where the soul is in a loving ruling sympathy with God's law, such elements of distress cannot exist. The workers of righteousness shall have peace, this is a law. II. This is the testimony of SCRIPTURE. "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding, her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." "The peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds," &c. Peace is the legacy of Christ. "Peace I leave you, my peace I give unto you," &c. III. This is the testimony of EXPERIENCE. In proportion to the amount of the love of God in the heart of a man is his peace, he is at peace with his own nature, with his conscience, with his God. "Peace," says Dr. J. Hamilton, "is love reposing. It is love on the green pastures, it is love beside the still waters. It is that great calm which comes over the conscience when it sees the atonement sufficient and the Saviour willing. It is unclouded azure in a lake of glass: it is the soul which Christ has pacified, spread out in serenity and simple faith, and the Lord God, merciful and gracious, smiling over it."

"Peace upon peace, like wave on wave  
 This is the portion that I crave;  
 The peace of God that passeth thought,  
 The peace of Christ which changeth not."

No. CCCXLVI.

**A Model Prayer.**

“LET MY CRY COME NEAR BEFORE THEE, O LORD,” &c. Psalms  
cxix. 169-176.

THESE words, which are the conclusion of a remarkable composition, remarkable not only for its length, but for its spiritual fertility and devoutness—are a supplication of a model sort. The prayer contains three noteworthy points—Notice I. The EARNESTNESS IT BREATHES. “*Let my cry come near before Thee, O Lord.*” This prayer is not a statement, not an address, but a “cry” denoting great fervency. Importunacy is the essential characteristic of true prayer. “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” II. The MERCIES IT INVOKES. What are the mercies here implored? First: *Spiritual light*. “*Give me understanding according to Thy word.*” In a moral sense we are blind and foolish. Secondly: *Soul deliverance*. “*Deliver me according to Thy word.*” Through the fall, souls are embarrassed, imperilled, and enslaved. Thirdly: *Divine help*. “*Let Thine hand help me.*” We talk of self-helpfulness. This alone is a fiction, a dream. No hand can really help us but the hand of God. Fourthly: *Continued existence*. “*Let my soul live, and it shall praise Thee.*” He wishes to live, not for any selfish ends, but in order to praise the Lord. “Take me not away in the midst of my days.” III. The PLEAS IT URGES. First: The testimony he pleads is the testimony of God. “*Deliver me according to Thy word.*” He prays for what was divinely promised. All true prayer must be guided by the Divine word. Secondly: He pleads his resolution to praise God. “*My lips shall utter praise when Thou hast taught me Thy statutes, my tongue shall speak of Thy word.*” He resolves to lay out the remainder of his days in the service of his Maker. “Unto Him be glory,” &c. Thirdly: He pleads his delight in the Divine law. “*I have longed for Thy salvation, O Lord, and Thy law is my delight.*” Those who fully appreciate what they have from God, are warranted to expect, and qualified to receive more. IV. The CONFESSION IT MAKES. “*I have gone astray like a lost sheep,*” or “*Yea, though I stray like a sheep that is lost.*” This is true of all (Luke xv. 4; Matt. xviii. 12, 13). Gone whence? From the knowledge, the image, the companionship of God. Whither? Into the wilderness of moral darkness and confusion. This is our helpless condition. Christ came to seek and to save the lost, blessed be His name! Thus concludes what Delitzsch calls a twenty-two fold string of aphorisms by one who was persecuted for his faith.

# *The Preacher's Scrap Book.*

THE LATE EDMOND BEALES, ESQ., JUDGE OF COUNTY COURTS.



UCH has been the very close connection between Edmond Beales and myself that the account of his death has struck me with sadness, and I cannot allow the event, impressive to me, to pass away unnoticed.

His death took place at his residence, Osborn House, Bolton Gardens, Sunday, June 26. He was the son of Mr. Samuel Beales, who was more than once Mayor of Cambridge, he was born in Cambridge July 3, 1803, educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, called to the bar of the Middle Temple in 1830, practised as a conveyancer, and was a revising barrister for Middlesex from 1862 to 1866. He had also a claim to literary distinction, as he was one of the writers in the *Etonian*, along with Praed, Moultrie, Derwent Coleridge, and Durnford (Bishop of Chichester). He was not only the President of the Reform League—which made the present Government possible, inasmuch as it established household and lodger suffrage—but its originator too. It is now more than twenty-five years ago since I made his acquaintance, and it commenced in connection with that journalistic enterprise in which I was at that time enthusiastically interested, an account of which I have given more than once in the pages of "THE HOMILIST."\* At the outset of that tremendous undertaking I was told by a parliamentary solicitor, that there was one man, who, if he could be obtained as a director, would by his great legal knowledge, high moral character, and signal ability, render service most honest and efficient. "Can he be obtained, and will you try?" said I. The answer was that he could not, as he was a very retired man, and absorbed in his practise, and that although as a lawyer he consulted him as his counsel, he was sure he could not succeed in interesting him in the undertaking: but he thought that with my enthusiasm I might perhaps excite in him an interest. Accordingly I wended my way to his chambers, 4, Stone Buildings, Lincoln's Inn Fields. When his clerk ushered me into his chambers, I saw a man whose hair was then commencing to have a silvery hue, bending over a brief. He was very short-sighted,

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\* See "Homilist," Vol. XL. page 71, &c.

and did not raise his head at once. When he rose, however, he greeted me in a calm and professional way. I explained my mission: he listened attentively, asked questions as I proceeded, and before I closed became so interested that he avowed his belief, not only in its national importance, but in its commercial feasibility. He gave in his adherence, and presented a cheque to qualify himself as a director. This event, seemingly trivial and fortuitous, was fraught with momentous issues both to himself and to his country. It roused a public spirit in him, which over-rode his private interests and professional habitudes, brought him out from the solitude of his chambers to the arena of public life, where he fought as a true hero for the rights of the people, and forced the House of Lords to pass that Reform measure which puts the franchise within the reach of the masses. In fighting those tremendous, yet bloodless, battles for the people, he had to make enormous sacrifices. It seems almost the order of heaven that he who would render great service to his race must, if not sacrifice himself, sacrifice that which makes life not only enjoyable, but even tolerable. As a counsel he lost his flourishing practise. Lord Chief Justice Cockburn—whose life pulsations were those of a sensualist and a snob—deprived him of his revising barristership of Middlesex, and thus he was brought to comparative want. The hireling scribblers of journalism spat their miserable ridicule at “Edmond Beales, M.A.,” in their daily and weekly issues. Bright and his party—who in ambush urged him on as the leader of a political revolution—whose services raised them to office, deserted him in his distress. It was only by the self-denying and loving services of a young barrister that he was rescued from his financial embarrassments, and secured to the position of a county judge, which he retained for ten years with a handsome income.\* But I had to do with him as a co-director on the Board of the National Newspaper League. Whilst at times, by slow judicial balancing of questions, he would irritate a Celtic nature like mine, brimful at the time with enthusiasm, he never once shook my faith in the honesty of his purposes, and the sincerity of his friendship. He worked with me in the undertaking from the commencement, through all the changes, and amidst all the oppositions of the enterprise up to its close. After, by the urgent and persistent persuasions of Samuel Lucas

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\* This gentleman may furnish in a future number a sketch of the affair.

(John Bright's brother-in-law)—who was the manager of the "Star" Newspaper—and the late Mr. Rawson, of Manchester (one of Mr. Bright's intimate friends), we, through utterly false statements, foolishly consented to join the "Morning and Evening Star." Mr. Beales became with me a member of the new Board, of which John Bright and his brother-in-law were also members. During the six or seven years in which we met, notwithstanding all the irritation which we "Dial" men felt at finding we were being sold and our purposes being broken, he remained faithful to the principle and to me. Since his death I have been glancing over the pages of the "Dial Register" (consisting of some three Vols., in which there is a report of all our meetings, and which contains a list of some 10,000 names), and in reading here some of his noble speeches, his personelle and oratoric cadences and utterances have come up from the regions of memory with all the vividness of reality. He was a man approaching six feet in stature, far removed from any signs of obesity, but somewhat thin and spare; in form, erect and symmetrical, with an intellectual brow a little drooping over a somewhat narrow chest. His eyes were hazel, not large, overhung by projecting and bushy brows. Streaks of humour seldom lighted up that grave countenance, albeit his looks were pleasing, and in his smile there was a fascination. His countenance was that of a man who had lived far away from the frivolous, who had wrestled with desperate earnestness with the great problems of life, always breathing under the heavy shadow of serious thought. His attitude as a speaker was generally very dignified: he stood erect with folded arms, sometimes, indeed, when a great passion would surge within him, he would shake his head and move his arms with not a little energy. His speeches were always well reasoned, and robed in language choice and classic, and in spirit always liberal and full of charity. Though he was a strong Churchman, his Churchism was no obstruction to free and affectionate communion with men of all types and sects. A more conscientious, Catholic, and devout man I never knew. He was utterly incapable of the mean, the false, or the dishonourable. Had all the men (or even a quarter of them) who co-operated with me in the movement referred to, been of his stamp, I have the profound belief that the "Dial" would be to-day one of the most powerful journals in Europe. Never perhaps in the history of journalism was the one we projected so urgently required as now. The daily press has become more venal and



conscienceless, and the more its circulation advances and its wealth increases, the more arrogant and reckless it becomes. When I projected the "Dial," the "Daily Telegraph" was offered to me for £500 and the "Standard" for £200, and now a thousand times the sum would not procure them. As to the weekly press several things called "Christian" have come into existence since our enterprise broke down by the falsehood, chicanery, and the ravenous avarice of those who identified themselves with it on account of its gradually accumulating wealth and promising supremacy. Not a few of these called "Christian" are in spirit and influence amongst the most un-Christly things in England to-day. Verily, for most of them "Satanian" would be a more honest name than "Christian." I know of no enterprise worthier of the loftiest intellectual powers and the purest and intensest patriotic and philanthropic aspirations of young manhood than the establishment of a journal which in ethical principles and philanthropic aims shall harmonise with the one which has fallen from our hands; nor could there be a more feasible plan. My faith, both in the supreme importance and the admirable practicability of the scheme, deepens with the experience of years. The fact that journalism (with the exception of one or two papers) has not even noticed the death of Edmond Beales, the friend of Kossuth, and Garibaldi's English confidant who visited that hero when a guest of the Duke of Sutherland, is in itself a disgrace to journalistic literature. The leading journal, as it is called, which will throw open its columns for biographic sketches of the smallest men with big titles, scarcely chronicled the event. Alas! a thousands times alas, that this fourth estate, as it is called, should have fallen so low.

It is said that the father of our illustrious friend was characterised by rough honesty. On one occasion, it is reported, that when he was Mayor of Cambridge a deputation from a society in London for the Conversion of the Jews, waited on him desiring him to preside at a meeting they intended holding in Cambridge advocating their cause. His voice, it would seem, was somewhat sonorous and heavy, and his speech not a little drawling, and he said to the deputation, "What do you want to do with the Jews?" The answer was, "To convert them to Christianity." Whereupon he replied, "God Himself, Sir, tried with them for centuries and could do nothing with them, and I am sure you cannot. No, I shall not take the chair."

## IN MEMORIAM—DR. CUMMING.

“SOMETHING more,” says *The Times*, “than a brief obituary notice is due to a luminary that less than twenty years ago was blazing in the mid heavens, and outshining the light of day. It is not that distance of time since Dr. Cumming occupied, not merely the principal niche, but the very pinnacle of the Temple of Fame. His name was everywhere. His announcements were on every wall and in every journal. His publications were innumerable, and on every table. In one way or another his figure was as familiar to most people as that of a near relative. To multitudes, not of the poor and unlearned, but of the high and the cultivated, he was the Heaven-sent seer, commissioned to receive the light of prophecy and throw it over the dark and stormy course of human affairs. No prophet or fortune-teller of the professional class ever achieved such a hold upon the frequenters of his shrine. Nature, it must be said, had been kind to Dr. Cumming. He was handsome and of a good figure. His bearing denoted perfect self-confidence and absolute certainty of conviction. He showed the gaiety and cheerfulness of a man who had every reason to be satisfied with himself, and who had the good word of everybody he cared for. Notwithstanding his immense labours, and the awful gravity of the utterances of which he was the authorised and inspired medium, he was a boy to the last. Though he was loyal to the Kirk, and proud of his loyalty, his position amounted to a practical independence, which he knew how to turn to the best account. In the sober lines of an establishment, and on its own native soil, few preachers would find it easy to go on for a whole generation delivering a rapid succession of new prophecies seriously affecting the Churches, the races, and the destinies of man. Their congregations would rebel, their ministerial brethren would protest, and their Church would decline to be compromised. But Dr. Cumming had all the metropolis and its country visitors to draw upon. No matter to what order country people belonged, they could not return home without being asked whether they had heard Dr. Cumming. He preached twice before the Queen, and people were charmed to read the sermons which he had preached and Her Majesty had listened to. His church

was in a quiet little court, where you might fancy yourself, if you pleased, on Sunday at least, in the dullest part of a small country town. But it was in the immediate vicinity of some of the noisiest and busiest institutions in the British Isles; the two great theatres, Covent-garden market, and the central police-court. Within a few yards of the brilliant crowd at the opera or the ballet, Dr. Cumming was soon to pour out the vials or the bowls of Divine wrath, over peoples, lands, and seas; to track the course of Divine vengeance, to prefigure Antichrist, and assign to all nations their parts in the great drama, and their shares in the approaching doom. As there is no such solitude as in a crowd, the locality was the more awful through its strange surroundings. For many years Dr. Cumming had a body of believers and devotees that a man of the highest genius and the most undoubted probity might have envied him. In at least half the religious households of this country a guest would have to consider well before he intimated the least misgiving of his piety or his sagacity. With such personal qualities and such miraculous gifts, it was no wonder that he occupied a large place in the affection of those good ladies who can reserve a special corner in their heart, over and above its strictly loyal obligations, for a spiritual and sympathetic guide. His great frankness and simplicity secured him from ill surmises, and though he certainly did sometimes amuse the captious and suspicious, nobody had a word to say against him in the matter of his social relations.

Yet now for some years this luminary has set, and, it must be added, has set in darkness and, if not in actual disgrace, in much disparagement. We have to ask how this was, for it is one of the notes of a good career that it should endure to the end, and shine all the brighter when the shadows grow long and the night closes in. Dr. Cumming unwittingly educated his crowd of dupes not only to credulity, but also to increased greediness and voracity for positive, particular, and circumstantial predictions. Every fresh publication gratified them one day only to make them more hungry for the like aliment the next. There are children who as soon as you have told them a monstrous story insist on your telling them another still more monstrous. They will have minute descriptions, the very numbers and dimensions, and the characteristics that most simulate truth. Perhaps Dr. Cumming might have been content to place his terrible prophecies a long way off and after his own probable lifetime; but this would not satisfy his readers, and

it is quite possible that his own mind was undergoing the same development, and that he became his own dupe. He became more and more positive and definite. About twenty years ago something induced him to name the year 1868 as that in which very terrible events were to take place. The year was not without events, but they failed to satisfy the strong and yet fastidious appetite of his followers. Dr. Cumming employed an immense amount of ingenuity to prove that what he had prophesied had come to pass, but he laboured in vain, and from that time his popularity declined. Then followed blow after blow. Family troubles, not to say family disgrace, supervened, and the rewards of divination had to be spent in the discharge of bills and loans. Dr. Cumming had one infirmity in common with the majority of literary men, reformers, preachers of faiths, propounders of philosophies, and teachers of morals. He was not a business man. He was generous before he was just. He spent other people's money freely in good causes, and his own money freely too. He had always something to be done, and it was always something that cost money. It came out at last that he was penniless, and his admirers, even though they had ceased to put implicit confidence in his forecasts of the future, subscribed handsomely to place him above difficulty and want. Perhaps his nature was one that required the support of flattery and the stimulus of a cause. Two years ago he began to fail, his heart probably leading the way, and his death at an age when many men are still in possession of all their spirits and their mental powers is now but the fall of a leaf in the midst of more real or more serious changes.

One ruling passion was strong in Dr. Cumming through all his disappointments to the very end. If he could no longer prophesy with the desired accuracy and confidence, he could still testify against Rome, argue against her acts and her tenets, and announce her final doom. Only three or four years since he engaged rooms in the Cathedral-yard at Exeter, and took his family down with him to see the immense bonfire usually made by Young Exeter before the west front of the Cathedral on Gunpowder Day. He was aware that all the authorities of the city were against this very dangerous demonstration, always accompanied with injuries through the careless handling of fireworks, yet against Popery he would side with disorder against order. The battle of his life was with Popery. It was the Goliath he was always ready to encounter with



sling and stone, the dragon he would transfix if ever it could be brought to stand the assault. That the Pope was Antichrist was so certain to him that he thought it impossible a good Protestant could be beaten in the argument on that point. Accordingly, a good many years ago he challenged Cardinal Wiseman to a public discussion at Exeter Hall, and had half the platform railed off for the members of the Anti-christian Church, should they venture to show fight. They made no appearance, leaving Dr. Cumming to claim a victory if he pleased. What is to be said of a career in which remarkable personal qualities, and something like good intentions, only show themselves to be made ridiculous, and bring religion itself into question? The case of Dr. Cumming falls too easily into the large and miscellaneous category of what philosophers and men of the world call imposture. That is a very hard word, and it does not take into account the mixture of good and evil there is in all men and in all things. If the same measure be applied to religion and to politics, we shall probably find the political impostors as numerous as the religious. But certainly Dr. Cumming's career conveys a very strong warning of the perils to truth, to honour, to Christian charity, to common sense itself, at which popularity may be sought and acquired. Dr. Cumming must have lost, whole or in part, the power of distinguishing between truth and error, reality and delusion. Riding his pleasant and profitable hobby, he could do nothing but go ahead and leave others to doubt and to discriminate. Protestants do this one way, and Papists another; but the nature of the act, and the results, are very much the same."

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### Numbers of the Dead.

"All that tread  
The globe are but a handful to the tribes  
That slumber in its bosom. Take the wings  
Of morning, and the Barcan desert pierce,  
Or lose thyself in the continuous woods  
Where flows the Oregon, and hears no sound  
Save his own dashings—yet the dead are there:  
And millions in those solitudes, since first  
The flight of years began, have laid them down  
In their last sleep: the dead reign there alone."



## *Literary Notices.*

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[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

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### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

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LECTURES ON TEACHING. By J. G. FITCH, M.A. Cambridge University Press.

These lectures were delivered in the University of Cambridge during the Lent term, 1880. The subject is a supreme one, and treated in a most scholarly and practical manner. The subjects of the leading chapters are: The Teacher and his Assistants—The School: its Aims and organisation—The Schoolroom and its Appliances—Discipline—Learning and Remembering—Examining—Preparatory Training—The Study of Language—The English Language—Arithmetic as an Art—Arithmetic as a Science—Geography and the Learning of Facts—History—Natural Science—The Correlation of Studies. The book abounds with useful thoughts most elegantly expressed, the author's mind runs on the lines of a deep philosophy. The following short extract on the different forms of associations may be quoted as an example:—"Now, if we consider it, the main differences in the mental calibre and character of men depend largely upon the sort of ideas which habitually or most readily coalesce in their minds. To a man of strong or lofty imagination a very common incident may suggest some hidden moral analogies or far reaching truth:

"To him the meanest flower that blows did give,  
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

And such a man we call a poet. In the case of another man every striking scene in the phantasmagoria of life sets him reflecting on its antecedents and consequences: and such a man has the philosophic temper, he is the reasoner, the moralist, the sage. To a third the sound of a word suggests only some grotesque simile, some remote allusion, some idea, which, though essentially different,

has a superficial resemblance; and such a person is the man of fancy or of wit. But when on hearing a word, or being reminded of a scene, the mind at once passes to the other words or actions which were linked with it when we recognised it at first: when it simply recalls a certain group of words or thoughts in the same sequence as that in which they were before presented: then we say the man has a good memory. He can, in fact, reproduce readily former associations, whether logical or not."

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THE SPIRIT OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE. By REV. STOPFORD BROOKE, M.A. Second Edition. London: Kegan, Paul & Co., 1, Paternoster Square.

The Author's preface to these sermons is somewhat remarkable. "The sermons published in this book have been in print for nearly a year, and were intended for much earlier publication: but they were unavoidably delayed, and in the meantime I have left the Church of England on the ground that it is no longer in my power to believe in the miraculous foundation of Christianity. I have not seen the sermons here set forth for months, and I cannot tell whether there may not be statements in them which I should not now modify. I have not time to look over the book now, but I should conjecture that there are very few passages, if any, which would need changing, for I have left the Church not to be less, but more, of a Christian. My only anxiety is that the book should not be read as a manifesto of my present views. The sermons contained in it are for the most part practical, not doctrinal." Whilst there is the absence from these sermons of what is called orthodox doctrine, there is the presence of a great and highly-cultured mind, outpouring thoughts, wide as the heavens, refreshing as the morning dew. The subjects of the discourses here are: The Awakening of St. Peter—The Last Scene with Peter—One Thing is Needful—Judgment of Others—The Law of Divine Judgment—The Limits of Forgiveness—The Sixty-third Psalm—The Second Psalm—The Root of Religious Life—The Surprise Christ Felt—Simeon—The Syro-Poenician Woman—Spiritual Exhaustion—Unselfish Immortality—Sunshine—Shadow—The Work of Inspiration—The Law of Giving—The Day of the Lord—Some Words on Prayer—Christ's Election of Disciples—God in Christ—The Peace of

Christ—Shakespeare and Human Life—The Search for God. Such sermons as these break in upon conventional thought like vernal influences upon the withered wastes of nature.

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THE JESUS OF THE EVANGELISTS. By REV. C. A. ROWE, M.A.  
London: Norgate & Co., Covent Garden.

We have always considered that the moral character of Christ as depicted in the gospel is a stronger proof of the divinity of His mission than the miraculous works that are ascribed to Him. In truth, before a miracle has any evidential force in establishing the Divine mission of its author, two things at least must be demonstrated; first, that no being but God can perform what we consider to be a miracle; and secondly, that God would never authorise any being to perform a miracle but in favour of truth. Neither of these positions can be established. But the record of a moral character not only utterly sinless, but sublimely, perfect in every virtue, seems to us an incontestable proof of the divinity of such a record. This is the proof which the able author of this work here employs. Besides a most valuable introduction, we have here eighteen chapters, the subjects of which are: The Portraiture of the Jesus as it is exhibited in the Gospels—The Portraiture of the Suffering Jesus of the Gospels—The Union of Holiness and Benevolence in the Person of the Jesus of the Gospels—The Moral Teaching of our Lord—The Law of our Religious and Moral Development—The Preparations made in the Gentile World for the Advent of Christianity—The Preparations made by Providence for the Introduction of Christianity through the Development of Judaism—Messianic Conceptions in the Old Testament—The Development of the Messianic Conception between the Prophetic Period and the Advent—The Developments of Judaism between the Termination of the Prophetic Period and the Advent—The Portraiture of Christ as depicted in the Gospels constitutes an Essential Unity—The Limits of the Influence which can be assigned to the Historical Jesus in the Creation of Christianity on the supposition of His purely Human Character—The Jesus of the Gospels no Mythical Creation—The Moral Aspect of our Lord's Character and Historical Reality—The Limits of the Period which Authentic History assigns as that within which the Conception of the Mythical Christ must have been Created and Developed in its Fulness—The Evidence afforded by the Epistles for the early existence

of the Portraiture of the Christ—The Nature and Character of the Mythic Gospels. This is certainly one of the most valuable works on the subject within our knowledge. It is the second edition, and therefore does not require to be particularly characterized or formally recommended. Every preacher should possess it.

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TEN LECTURES ON THE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF UNITARIAN THOUGHT AND DOCTRINE. By Various Ministers. With Preface by Rev. JAMES MARTINEAU, D.D., LL.D. Unitarian Association, 37, Norfolk Street, Strand.

These Lectures are not to be taken as advocacies in the interest of what is called Unitarian Christianity, nor as controversial refutations of orthodox Christianity. "The Lectures," says Dr. Martineau in his able preface, "stand forth in defence of truths which others also hold, but hold under conditions less favourable, it is conceived, to their clear exhibition and firm support." We think we discover some discrepancies between the views of some of the authors of these discourses. This might have been expected, and enhances the interest and merits of the work. "As it speaks," says the preface, "with various voices, it may the better go home to various minds so that each in his tongue may hear of the wonderful works of God." As the various authors are not in thorough agreement amongst themselves, it will not be strange if we, who occupy a different standpoint and have passed through a different train of thought, should not find ourselves in entire harmony with all the views of either, or of all. To us the work is not the less valuable, but more so, on this account. To compare the abilities of the various authors as here displayed would be invidious, at the same time we feel bound to say that there are two or three who reveal powers of mind, culture, logical acumen and rhetorical utterance of the highest kind.

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GEORGE HOPE, OF FENTON, BARNES. A SKETCH OF HIS LIFE, COMPILED BY HIS DAUGHTER. Edinburgh: David Douglas.

This book is a record of the life of a tenant farmer, which was spent almost entirely in his native country. It consists mainly of extracts from his letters to one of his brothers with whom he kept a regular correspondence for more than forty years. These extracts

are made and compiled by his daughter. The letters reveal one of the highest types of human kind, the son of a poor farmer by his own efforts, indomitable, indefatigable, arduous, and withal thoroughly honest, rising to those heights in life of practical intelligence, public sympathy, philanthropic distinctions, compared to which the highest heights of human occupants are only as mounds to the Andes. He was a coadjutor with the great reformers of his day, and a leader of some of the most important questions of his times.

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THE POEMS OF GEORGE HEATH, THE MOORLAND POET. By FRANCIS REDFERN. Hanley: Allbut and Daniel, Percy Street.

Many if not most, of the greatest minds have been born in obscurity and cradled in poverty. And is it not far better to come into the world in scenes of penury and want with a great mind, than to enter it in scenes of luxury, opulence, and splendour, with the soul of a dwarf? The Author of these poems is an example of the former mode of advent. Some of these poems reveal a high order of mind, he had an eye that looked into the heart of a thing, and a heart to reach through forms into the spirit of things. Undoubtedly, had his life been extended—for he died in his twenty-fifth year—he would have taken a high place amongst the bards of England.

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MATTHEW MELLOWDEW. A STORY WITH MORE HEROES THAN ONE. By JACKSON WRAY. London: Cassell, Petter & Galpin.

The recommendatory words which we gave "*Nestleton Magna*," a previous work of this author, we would heartily give to this. The dramatic genius, the humourous current, the moral insight, the broad humanity, and the literary aptitudes—necessary qualifications of a good novelist—are manifest in this book. Whilst there is a little too much unctuous pietising to please us always, it abounds with that which charms and instructs.

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JOHN'S APOCALYPSE. By H. BROWNE, M.A., M.D. Manchester: Tubbs & Co., Market Street.

Whoever goes into the Apocalypse, it has been said goes into the region of fog, where objects are seen very indistinctly, often in a



grotesque and distorted form, and some never seen at all. Hence the descriptions of expositors of the things in the book are often so incongruous, contradictory, that those who have consulted many of them are likely to lose interest in any new comers. We have glanced through this volume and our impression is that it contains much that is true and useful, with some things that are somewhat absurd.

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THE LIFE'S WORK IN IRELAND OF A LANDLORD WHO TRIED TO DO HIS DUTY. By W. BENCKE JONES. London: Macmillan & Co.

The author in the preface says, "In order to form a sound judgment concerning the condition of the people in Ireland, there are several matters which must be borne clearly in mind. Fiction (1) That all Ireland is alike and in the same hopeless and distressful state. Fiction (2) That no landlord has done anything to improve the land, or the people of Ireland, or spend any money for that end. Fiction (3) That evictions are cruel, and equivalent to signing the death warrants of tenants, who have no choice but the workhouse, there to remain until they die. Fiction (4) That tenants in Ireland are too poor to contract freely." Although the author, as an Irish landlord, writes strongly in the interest of his class, it is manifest from his own statements that the Irish land-laws require a radical reformation.

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EXPOSITION OF GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN. By R. GOVETT. VOL. I. London: Bemrose & Son, Old Bailey.

During the last few years several expositions of this Gospel have appeared, varying not a little, not only in style and degrees of scholarship, but in doctrine and purpose as well. For our own part we consider that a practical treatment based on a correct interpretation of the text, is the most needed and valuable. Such is the volume before us. It has no philological investigations and mere verbal criticisms, and displays of that kind of scholarship, but abounds with practical truths, which seem to come out of the passages examined. The work has no quotations from other productions, and seems to be made up entirely of the author's own independent reflections. All we can do here is just to call attention to this, the first volume, hoping soon to receive the second, and be able to pronounce a maturer judgment.



## *Leading Homily.*

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IN MEMORIAM.—THE DEAN OF  
WESTMINSTER.

“THEY SERVE HIM DAY AND NIGHT IN HIS TEMPLE.”—  
*Rev. vii. 15.*

**H**HE heavenly life described in the words of our text, and in the surrounding verses, is but a nobler counterpart to some lives lived upon earth. Is it not such a counterpart to the earthly life of the Dean of Westminster, whose death is mourned to-day, not only by thousands of English Churchmen, but by multitudes throughout Christendom? Was not his life in a considerable degree, what that of “the spirits of just men made perfect” is completely, a life of safety, of honour, and of ceaseless service—yes, and of ceaseless service in the Temple of God? For somehow all that he was, and said, and did, seems to be wonderfully associated with thoughts of that great Abbey, whose shadow to-day falls on his unburied coffin, and under whose majestic arches his body will sleep the long sleep of death. I know the sanctuaries

of earth at their very noblest and best are but poor hints of the Temple above, but they are hints. And if there is any chief sanctuary in England, I suppose we shall all agree it is the Abbey of Westminster. How Dean Stanley loved that Abbey ! How he gloried in it ! How he served his generation and his God in connection with it, everybody who knows anything about him, knows. It is not surprising that from his very death-bed, among the last articulate sentences he uttered to the Archbishop of Canterbury, there should have been this : “ I have laboured amid many frailties and much weakness to make this institution more and more the great centre of religion and national life, in a truly liberal spirit.” Remembering those last words about the Abbey, and recalling, as some can, from his books, some from his services there, and all can from what has been so notable about him, his devotion to it, our lines of thought to-night may naturally take some such direction as this :—*The connection in idea between the Dean and the Abbey as illustrating his strong and almost passionate historic sympathies ; his generous and enthusiastic catholicity ; his diligent and untiring activity, and his loving and devout piety.*

I.—The connection in our thoughts between the Dean and the Abbey illustrates *his strong and almost passionate sympathy with the historic*. No one can think of Westminster Abbey, much less enter the venerable pile, without feeling that he is in the very presence of the muse of History. The recollections of the coronations that it has witnessed, from that of William the Conqueror, in broken, but wonderful succession, down to that of our Queen ; the recollections of the burials

of kings and queens, of abbots and deans, and men of varied fame ; the recollections of the religious conferences and convocations ; the memories of such sermons as those of Owen and Baxter that seem to linger around its great arches, all make us feel that the Abbey is a monument not only of the history of the English Church, but also of the English nation. And the Dean was like the Abbey. It is proverbially true of him that he laid hold of Truth from its historic side. I don't mean, of course, merely from that side ; for it has been well said of him that we shall scarcely find again "one in whom there was such a perfect combination of historic feeling for the past, and delicate insight into the present." But, as his books indicate, and his very passion for the Abbey illustrates, it was on the historical side of Truths, of Men, and of Institutions, that he loved to gaze, and to speak. In his immortal biography of Thomas Arnold, which is perhaps his most famous book, he lays hold, not of his views, but of his life, not so much of what Arnold said, as of what he was. And when he comes to a more sacred task still—that of illustrating the Scriptures in his great works of the "Jewish Church," and "Sinai and Palestine," he succeeds in making picturesque and vivid the life of the elect nation, perhaps as none had done before. And his well-known "Memorials of Canterbury," and "History of Westminster Abbey," still show this deep sympathy with the historic, the actual. In all his recitals and interpretations of History we find that this was his great and noble theme—"That all God's dispensations to man, and all human nature and history are one ; and that the harmony between the natural and spiritual

is the key to all right understanding of both," and he rejoices to unfold in history, "enough to enable us to discern amid the shadows of the remote past, and athwart the misunderstandings of later times, the sayings and doings of Him, who is still for all mankind the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

II.—The connection in our thoughts between the Dean and the Abbey illustrates *his generous and enthusiastic catholicity*. Westminster Abbey is the very type of catholicity. It is so as to its structure. There is no building which combines so many of the chief glories of mediæval and more modern architecture. And as to its monumental memories, one comes at every step into contact not only with the shades of those who have been royal, but of the warrior, statesman, actor, novelist, musician, hymn-writer, painter, poet, and traveller. There is no structure in the world, I suppose, where one can meet with the memorials of so many different classes and centuries. In that it illustrates the great comprehensiveness in the spirit of Dean Stanley, which sprang largely from his intelligent sympathy with human struggles and difficulties. (1) This catholicity is very remarkable in reference *to classes*. The man who had a place, and a distinguished place, too, in what is commonly called Society; the man to whom the Queen referred as her "trusted friend," was also the man who, Saturday by Saturday, delighted to gather together groups of artisans, to be their guide over the Abbey, and patiently explain everything to them. And hence, among the utterances of the first few days after his death, there is not only what the Queen has to say about him, but also what the Working Men's Union has to say about "the noble



life which has done so much for humanity and for religion." He had sympathy, too, with the foreigner, whether it be American, Frenchman, or Armenian. Then how exquisite was his care for the children, for who of us who has ever listened to him talking to the children on Innocents' Day will forget his loving, simple, persuasive utterances. His catholicity is remarkable.

(2) As to *enterprises of progress*. When the schoolmasters and mistresses of our elementary schools met last year for conference in London, no one showed a warmer interest, or gave them a heartier greeting than the Dean, who gathered them early in the morning to hold a special service, and to hear one of his characteristic addresses, stimulating them to the nobler ambitions of their toilsome life-work. Science found in him, either in his Deanery or in the Abbey, all the help that he could render, and that from his office as well as from his culture, was by no means inconsiderable.

(3) And as to *Christian communions*. Who that has read his history of the "Eastern Church" does not discern his love for that most Catholic of ancient Churches? Who of us, as Nonconformists, does not remember how he threw open the nave of the Abbey—all that he could do—for the preaching of Max Muller, Dr. Stoughton, Dr. Moffat, and Dr. Caird. He rejoiced to call us, though some of us could not follow his meaning in the phrase, "the nonconforming members of the Church of England." His catholicity is gloriously notorious, and it is to be explained largely by the fact that he laid hold of truth from its historic side. For revel only in dogmas and philosophies, and you must soon come to separation; but pass along the paths of history, and trace the

struggles through which good men have passed, and so come to have fellowship with some of those, about whom, too often in ignorance, the orthodox have said harsh things, and learn how Christ has been laying hold of men of all classes, of all conditions, and ways of thinking, and your hearts must be enlarged; you will come to feel that those who are bravely groping in darkness for the true light are your brethren; that though they do not see Christ, Christ sees them; that though they do not apprehend Christ, they are apprehended of Him. Then, as a further explanation of his Catholicity, there was his peculiarly loving nature. As one of the leaders of a denomination which is not usually noted for wide views, said to me of him yesterday, and said well, "He was one of those men who are almost Christians by nature, and for whom grace has very little to do." His loving nature, and his devout piety, as well as his sympathetic clinging to history, combine to explain how it was he was so unsectarian as to class and race and church, for the loving man, the devout man, the historically wise man, must always be the catholic man.

III.—The connection in our thoughts between the Dean and the Abbey illustrates *his diligent and untiring activity*. In that Abbey there has been of late years, not simply frequent service—service twice a day—but service rendered with an intelligent devoutness and a spiritual tenderness that is not always found in cathedrals. These services have seemed to many to redeem the giant fabric from being a dull, sepulchral structure, and to have made it pulse and glow with life. In these daily services there was not only, perhaps, the aid to the practical piety of the Dean, and to many

who gathered there, but there was also a symbol of his own ceaseless activity, for was he not one of those who "serve God day and night in His temple?" His office might have been a post of ease and self-indulgence. The snug Deanery is often conferred as a reward for past services, rather than as an opportunity for increased usefulness; it was not so with Arthur Stanley: he made it throb with life and pulse with perpetual activities. A small attenuated man: those who measure everything by bulk were accustomed to call him the "little Dean." But there was in him an industrious activity, and an unwearying energy which may well shame some who are stalwart and robust. How many sided his activities were, his biography, when it comes to be written, may be able to tell. This sermon cannot. He was here, there, and everywhere. His wise words in his address to the University of which he had been chosen Rector, or at the inauguration of our own University College, will easily illustrate one sphere of his work; while often, as indeed at the last, he spoke words of homely kindness to the poor people who were gathered to receive from him the prizes for their bright window gardens in the great Babylon of dirt and gloom. He was at the bidding of almost any enterprise, and yet ever supremely consecrated to his ministry. Indeed, when this day fortnight, he had, from illness, to leave the pulpit twice, he returned again, and yet again, to finish his allotted duty. Nor, though we forbear enumerating his many toils, must we forget that the Committee for the revision of the New Testament, which has lately completed its labours, found in him a ready, diligent, and unwearyed helper.

IV.—The connection in our thoughts between the

Dean and the Abbey illustrates his *loving and devout piety*. For it has been said of him again and again by those who knew him best, that he had very deep religious feeling, and a very sincere love of God. He regarded the Abbey as Hooker tells us the Founder himself regarded it, when he said he hoped he was planting a ladder upon which the angels of God might be seen ascending and descending from the courts of heaven for many generations. "For," said he, "what are all inspirations but the descending of the angels of God; and what are the aspirations of the people in prayer and praise but the ascending of the angels." And Dean Stanley felt that the Abbey was the shrine of worship; that gave the opportunity for the outpouring of the love to man, and of the devotion to God that together constitute true worship. Because of the first of these convictions, while he was perpetually the champion of unpopular truths, and the leader of forlorn hopes, he never made a personal enemy. He was continually the mediator between men of different orders of thoughts: the peacemaker he wanted to be, if he might, between the communions of the Church of Christ. One rejoices to feel about such men as he, that religion has made them what they are; that the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ has in them new evidences of its spirituality and its life.

Of his care for God, and his deep religious feelings and personal experiences, we know but little, and it is likely that we should, for, in proportion usually to the refinement of the man, will be his silence about his own deeper life. We do not wonder that John the Beloved could say only this about his consecration to Christ: "We have seen the Messiah." That was

all he could tell; the intercourse was too hallowed, too sacred, to be spoken of. Others may speak boldly, but such men as John the Beloved can only come out from their communion with Christ, and say by their lives, "We have seen the Messiah." When the Dean was taken away from us, he was in the midst of preaching a course of sermons on the Beatitudes; and, as those who know him intimately have said, his life was a beautiful commentary on those Beatitudes—for he was distinguished by mercifulness, by humility of spirit, by the earnest and passionate desire to be a peacemaker, by the purity of heart that shall see God. And certainly it was a commentary on the beatitude of malediction, for all men did not speak well of him. Though it was uttered more seldom latterly, one can still almost hear the howl of those who called him heretic, and see the shrug of the shoulders with which men suggested he was unsound. Even last Saturday, upon his yet unburied coffin, the "Church Times" spat its scorn, even as men spat upon his Lord and Master eighteen hundred years ago.

Last Good Friday he said to the great congregation that had gathered to hear him at the Abbey, that he wanted to preach to them once again upon a text from which he had preached to them before; the pathos of that "once again" produced complete silence, and he proceeded to announce the text, "Father, into Thy hands I commit my spirit." And then he recalled to them how, again and again, the dying lips of good men had breathed these words, and the dying spirits of good men had been inspired by them. That twice preached sermon seems to have been a key to his life.

Is there need to say in conclusion that there was



very much, both in his ecclesiastical theories and his theological views, from which many who listen to me would widely differ? And, to be frank, let me say there was very much from which, with great diffidence, I should presume most strongly to differ. But our meditation to-night has had to do, not with his ecclesiasticism, not with his theology, but with his religion, which was his life; with the union of his spirit with God through Christ, and of his fellowship with the Father through the Son. And however nobly true the description of our text may have been of that life, we rejoice to think that now it is true of him with a more thorough completeness. It is some consolation to those who feel that by his almost sudden death "we miss one of the brightest, and tenderest, and most beautiful spirits we have had among us this generation" to know that he has only passed through a short porch of pain and suffering into that glorious Temple above, where God's servants serve Him day and night.

And into that Temple may God in His infinite mercy bring us all.

"Where that innumerable throng  
Of saints and angels mingle song,  
Where wrought with hands, no temples rise,  
For God Himself their place supplies;  
Nor priests are needed, in the abode  
Where the whole hosts are priests to God;  
Think what a Sabbath there shall be  
The Sabbath of eternity."

*Bristol.*

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

# The Preacher's Homiletical Commentary.

## HOMILETIC SKETCHES ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

**OUR PURPOSE.**—Many learned and devout men have gone *Philologically* through this **TEHELIM**, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough **HOMILETIC** treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

**OUR METHOD.**—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1) **THE HISTORY** of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2) **ANNOTATIONS** of the passages. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase or allusion that may occur.—(3) **THE ARGUMENT** of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4) **THE HOMILETICS** of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately educed, as to suggest such thoughts and indicate such sermonizing methods as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

No. CLXI.

### Genuine Religious Consciousness.

"NOT UNTO US, O LORD," &c. Ps. cxv. 1-18.

**HISTORY.**—It has been thought that as this Psalm makes such a strong reference to idolatry, it was composed subsequent to the return of the Jews from their Babylonian captivity. It has not only allusions to Isaiah, but quotations from him, and in all probability was written at a period late in Jewish history.

**ANNOTATIONS:**—Ver. 1.—"*Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory for Thy mercy and for Thy truth's sake.*" This verse is considered to be rather the language of praise than of prayer, the repetition "*not unto us*" expressing a deep

sense of unworthiness. The plea for the Divine favour is grounded, not on the worthiness of the suppliant, but on the mercy and truth of Jehovah.

Ver. 2:—"Wherefore should the heathen say, where is now their God"? A challenge this often addressed by the worldly to the godly man. Because the Almighty does not interpose visibly on behalf of His people, in terrible crisis the unbeliever utters reproaches like this.

Ver. 3:—"But our God is in the heavens: He hath done whatsoever He hath pleased." A triumphant answer to the

sceptic's scorn. Our God not only exists, but exists as a mighty sovereign, enthroned in the heavens and ruling over all.

Ver. 4-8.—“*Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: They have ears, but they hear not: Noses have they, but they smell not: They have hands, but they handle not: Feet have they, but they walk not: Neither speak they through their throat: They that make them are like unto them; So is every one that trusteth in them.*” In what a contemptible contrast are the gods of the heathen here brought to the One True and Living God. They are made, the One in the heavens is *un-created*. They are formed of *matter*—silver and gold, the One in the heavens is a *spirit*. They are mere *dead forms* having no “*mouths,*” no power of utterance, “*eyes,*” but no power of vision, “*ears,*” but dead to every sound, “*hands,*” but they have no sensibility or motion, “*feet,*” but cannot move a hair's breadth from their position. They are not only dead matter formed by human hands, but miserable

impostors, representing in their forms, powers and organs which they possess not.

Ver. 9-11:—“*O Israel, trust thou in the Lord: He is their help and their shield. O house of Aaron, trust in the Lord: He is their help and their shield. Ye that fear the Lord trust in the Lord: He is their help and their shield.*”

“There is manifestly a change here in the musical and liturgical use of the Psalm. It is thought that while the first eight verses were rendered by the whole choir, the first clause of this and of the two following verses was sung as a solo by one of the Levites, and the second clause, “*He is their help and their shield,*” chanted as a refrain by the chorus. The threefold division into “*Israel,*” the “*house of Aaron,*” and those “*who fear the Lord,*” is the same as in Psalm cxviii. 2-4. In Psalm cxxxv. 19-20, the house of Levi is added.”—Young.

Ver. 12:—“*The Lord hath been mindful of us: He will bless us; He will bless the house of Israel; He will bless the house of Aaron.*” The voice that had commanded Israel in the preceding verses to “*trust in the Lord,*” now proclaims the kindness of

God to them in past times, and the blessings He will bestow upon them in times to come.

Ver. 13:—"He will bless them that fear the Lord, both small and great." There is no respect of persons with God. Those that fear the Lord—the godly—however humble, shall be blessed, as well as those who are highly exalted.

Ver. 14-15:—"The Lord shall increase you more and more, you and your children, ye are blessed of the Lord which made heaven and earth." Some translate "blessed be ye." The title "Maker of heaven and earth" is here probably mentioned in reference to the contemptible idols who were made, and could themselves make nothing.

Ver. 16-17:—"The heaven, even the heavens are the Lord's; but the earth hath He given to the children of men. The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence." "The heavens (are) heavens (*i.e.* a dwelling place) for the Lord," &c. (Acts xvii. 24.) It may be that the mention of two dwelling places (heaven and earth) suggests the mention of a third, the land of silence, darkness, and death-shade, in which the

dead cannot praise Him as they do and will, who are all but in His glorious presence."

—Canon Cook.

Ver. 18.—"But we will bless the Lord from this time forth and for evermore. Praise the Lord." This is a grand resolution, we the living in body and soul, we will praise Him from this time forth and for evermore.

ARGUMENT: God is entreated by His people to vindicate not their honour but His own, ver. 1-2: which is contrasted with the impotence of idols and their worshippers, ver. 3-8, and urged as a reason why his people should trust in him, for a large increase, ver. 9-15, and a fulfilment of his purpose to glorify himself by the praises of the living, not the dead, ver. 16-17, in the promotion of which end the church declares her resolution to co-operate for ever, ver. 18. The general tenor of the Psalm, thus stated, and its particular contents, make it perfectly well suited to the state of things in the which the series is supposed to have been written, namely, that succeeding the return from exile but before the rebuilding of the temple.—Dr. Alexander.

HOMILETICS :—Homilectically, these words may be regarded as presenting for illustration, *genuine religious consciousness*. The subjects of this consciousness are various in their nature and tendency, yet withal harmonious. We have four things here presented :—

I. A consciousness of GOD'S GREATNESS LEADING TO A CONTEMPT FOR ALL IDOLS. Mark here what the Psalmist says in relation to—First: The *majesty of God*. He indicates (1) That God is great in His *moral excellence*. "*Unto Thy name give glory for Thy mercy and for Thy truth's sake.*" "*Mercy*" and "*truth*" lie at the foundation of all moral greatness. The grand mission of Christ was to bring these into the world in the most impressive forms. "*The law came by Moses, but grace and truth by Jesus Christ.*" All virtuous affections and tendencies have their origin in mercy or love. All sound beliefs or convictions are based on truth or *reality*. Without love all is selfishness, and selfishness is the essence of sin. Without truth all is sham, and sham is the curse of the world. In God these two exist in essential unity and in infinite perfection. He indicates that (2) God is great in *His sovereignty*. "*Our God is in the heavens, he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.*" He is over all. There is no being above Him, the highest are infinitely below Him, and in all His operations He is absolutely free. "*He hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.*" He hath no counsellor to teach Him new methods of action, no power to restrain Him in any course. He acts according to His own good pleasure, the only being who is absolutely free, independent, and irresponsible.

Mark what the Psalmist says of—Secondly: The *worthlessness of idols*. The author had an impression



of the transcendent greatness of God, and that gave him an inexpressible contempt for idols, and hence he says, "*Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands.*" He represents idols as (1) *Material* productions. "*Silver and gold,*" mere dead gross matter; (2) *Human* productions—"The work of men's hands." Men-made Gods. (3) *Worthless* productions. They can neither "*speak,*" nor "*see,*" nor "*hear,*" nor "*smell,*" nor touch nor move. (4) *Lying* productions. They are represented as possessing organs for work which they are essentially unable to effect. They are impostors. (5) *Symbolic* productions. "*They that make them are like unto them.*" They are but the visible forms of the brutish ignorance, stupidity, and depravity of those who made and worshipped them, mere embodiments of their ideas and wishes. (a) There is a sense in which *every man makes his God*. The God which men worship is not the Absolute One. He is invisible, unapproachable, incomprehensible. But man's God is the *idea* he has formed of Him. The more degraded the mind the more degraded the God, the more elevated the mind, the more exalted the God. No two minds, therefore, worship the same identical object. There is a polytheism that is innocent and unavoidable. The God that some worship here in our monotheistic England is scarcely less contemptible than the idols here described. (b) There is a sense in which *every man's God makes him*. The God we worship is the object of our supreme affection, and by the law of our nature that object transforms us into its own image.

We have here presented—

II. A consciousness of God's GOODNESS INSPIRING THE HIGHEST PHILANTHROPY. What is the highest philan-

thropy? That whose main object is to draw men to the One True and Living God; and the man who is conscious of God's goodness, who has "tasted and seen that the Lord is good," will surely address himself to this work—the work of drawing men to God. "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God is that ye might be saved." Having experienced God's goodness, his supreme desire will be that others should do the same. This is what the Psalmist felt:—"O Israel, trust thou in the Lord: he is their help and their shield: O house of Aaron, trust in the Lord: he is their help and their shield. Ye that fear the Lord, trust in the Lord: he is their help and their shield. The Lord hath been mindful of us: he will bless us; he will bless the house of Israel; he will bless the house of Aaron. He will bless them that fear the Lord, both small and great. The Lord shall increase you more and more, you and your children. Ye are blessed of the Lord which made heaven and earth."

We have here presented—

III. A consciousness of GOD'S PROPERTY LEADING TO A SENSE OF OUR STEWARDSHIP. "*The heaven even the heavens are the Lord's: but the earth hath He given to the children of men.*" "*The heaven, even the heavens,*" mean all things. He who created the universe owns it, it is His absolute property, and how vast, how immeasurable it is! "All that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine; Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and Thou are exalted as head above all." But this sense of God's unbounded wealth leads to the impression of our stewardship of the earth which He hath given us. "*The earth hath he given to the children of men.*" To the "*Children of men,*" not to a class, but given to

them as air and light, and fire and water are given for their common use. “*The earth is the Lord’s,*” we are told, but He has given it to the children of men in trust. This fact affords (1) A strong rebuke to all *social monopoly*. What right has one man more than another to claim an absolute ownership of any part of it? The fact affords (2) A strong rebuke to all *religious indifference*. It is given to us for high purposes. (a) As a scene for physical developement. (b) As a school for intellectual culture. (c) As a temple for religious worship. (d) As a sphere for evangelistic labour.\*

We have here presented—

IV. A CONSCIOUSNESS OF LIFE’S TERMINATION URGING THE DISCHARGE OF RELIGIOUS DUTY. “*The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence. But we will bless the Lord from this time forth and for evermore. Praise the Lord.*” This mortal life must end, and at its end, so far as the body is concerned, all praise is over. When we go down into the “silence” of the grave our voice of praise on earth is hushed—hushed for ever. This being so we should resolve with the Psalmist, to bless the Lord, “*to bless the Lord from this time forth and for evermore.*”

“The dead no more can speak Thy praise,  
They dwell in silence and the grave;  
But we shall live to sing Thy grace,  
And tell the world Thy power to save.”

CONCLUSION:—How important is a true religious consciousness! Such a consciousness is ever operative—operative in the right direction, leading to a contempt for idolatry, the inspiration of the highest philanthropy, the discharge of our stewardship, and to the duty of immediate and constant devotion.

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\* See “Homilist” Vol. xvii., Page 46.

## HOMILETIC GLANCES AT THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN.

[As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form of Sermonic Outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are:—"Introduction to New Testament," by Bleek; "Commentary on John," by Tholuck; "Commentary on John," by Hengstenberg; "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," by Westcott; "The Gospel History," by Ebrard; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon; "St. John's Gospel," by Oosterzee. "Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Horner, Lange, Sears, Farrer, etc., etc.]

### The Divine Suppliant.

No. CXXVI.

"I PRAY FOR THEM, I PRAY NOT FOR THE WORLD, BUT FOR THEM WHICH THOU HAST GIVEN ME, FOR THEY ARE THINE. AND ALL MINE ARE THINE," &c. (John xvii. 9-19).

EXPOSITION:—Ver. 9.—"*I pray for them, I pray not for the world,*" &c. "Am praying for them, and am not praying for the world."—*Lange*. Christ did pray for others. In this chapter He says, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word." And on the cross He prayed for His enemies, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." But here He intimates that His prayer is confined entirely to the apostles.

Ver. 10. "*And all Mine are Thine are Thine are Mine.*"

• "Any man," says a modern expositor, "may say, What

is mine is Thine, but only the Son can say, What is Thine is Mine." This is not quite correct, for there is a sense—and a very profound sense—in which every godly man may truthfully say to the Father, "What is mine is Thine." Of this more hereafter. "*I am glorified in them.*" "This expression has been variously understood. There is no reason for departing from the constant meaning of the term, to be glorified. Notwithstanding His form of a servant, Jesus had appeared to their hearts in all His beauty as Son of God: even before having been restored

to His glory, He had regained it in them by the fact that they had recognised Him for what He truly was."—*Godet*.

Ver. 11. "*And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world and I come to Thee.*" "The immediate future is still regarded as present. The words have a special reference to the interval between His death and the Day of Pentecost, which would be for the disciples a time of darkness and danger, when they would have special need of the Father's care. '*Holy Father.*' Comp. verses 1, 24, 25. There is a special fitness in the word '*holy*' here as in opposition to the world. The disciples were left in the world, but they were not of the world (v. 14). These were spiritually God's children separated from the world (verse 6), and He commits them to the Holy Father that He may keep them from the evil of the world. "*Keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me.*" The reading is slightly doubtful, but if we take what would certainly seem to be the true text, the rendering should be, '*Keep them in Thy name which Thou hast given Me.*' (Comp. verse 12). The Authorised

Version renders the same words by '*through Thy name*' in this verse, and by '*in Thy name*' in verse 12. The thought appears to be that the revelation of the nature of God by Christ to the world (verse 6), was that which He Himself received from the Father. '*I have not spoken of myself, but the Father which sent me gave me a commandment what I should say and what I should speak.*' "*That they may be one as we are.*" This clause depends upon the words, '*Keep them in Thy name.*' They had so far realised the revelation of God that they had known Christ's whole life to be the utterance of God to their spirits. He prays that they may be kept in this knowledge in order that they may so know the Father through Him, as to become themselves one with the Father."—*Professor Watkins, M.A.*

Ver. 12. "*While I was with them in the world I kept them in Thy name.*" I have now done with the world, My mission is finished, and am no more in the world, but these are in the world. "*Those that Thou gavest Me I have kept, none of them is lost but the son of perdition.*"



Webster and Wilkinson observe on this expression that "it is not implied that Judas was one of those whom the Father had given to the Son," but I think if language means anything it is implied. "*That the Scripture might be fulfilled.*" What Scripture? It is not given. I know of no inspired prediction pointing to this event. It is probable therefore that the Heavenly Teacher had some infallible prediction before His mind with which we are utterly unacquainted.

Ver. 13. "*And now come I to Thee, and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.*" "The world is far behind, the agony is past, He stands upon the mount of God, approaching His Father's smiling face. But all this is upon a conceptual standpoint, for He immediately adds, "*these things I speak in the world.*" Why speak them in the world? The words immediately following explain, that His apostles might hear, that one apostle might record, so that their joy, and the joy of the future Church, whom they represent, may be fulfilled."

Ver. 14. "*I have given them Thy word; and the world*

*hath hated them because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.*" See on chap. xv. 18-21.

Ver. 15. "*I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world.*" Though their departure would be a gain to them, it would be a loss to the world. "*But that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil.*" That is from all moral evil.

Ver. 16. "*They are not of the world even as I am not of the world.*" See on verses 6-9, and chap. xv. 13.

Ver. 17. "*Sanctify them through (in) Thy truth: Thy word is truth.*" Not only keep and guard them, but sanctify them. Make them holy. Truth here means God's truth as revealed in Christ.

Ver. 18. "*As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.*" "As their mission was designed for no other end than to carry into effect the purpose of His own mission into the world, so He speaks of the authority by which He was sending them into the world, as but an extension of the same authority by which Himself was sent of the Father. As He was the Father's Ambassador

and Agent, so they were to be His. Nay, He represents them as already sent, just as He represents His own personal work on earth as already at an end: and what His soul is now filled with and looking forward to is the coming fruit of that work, the travail of His soul, and

His satisfaction therein.”—  
*Dr. Brown.*

Ver. 19. “*And for their sakes I sanctify Myself that they also might be sanctified through the truth.*” Christ consecrates Himself to the service of His disciples, and consecrates Himself in order that they may be consecrated.

HOMILETICS:—There are certain truths implied in this part of Christ’s prayer that cannot be too prominently or powerfully set forth. What are they?

I. That the SUPREME GOOD OF MAN IS SPIRITUAL, AND NOT TEMPORAL. The blessing that Christ here seeks for the disciples is entirely spiritual. It is that they may be “*kept from the evil,*” that they may be thoroughly “*sanctified,*” that is made holy, that they may be all spiritually united, “*all may be one,*” made one with themselves, with Him, and with their Father. He does not pray that they may be healthy in body, prosperous in circumstances, or enjoy a long life in this world. He does not undervalue these things, but temporal prosperity to Him was of very insignificant importance, compared with spiritual. There are good reasons for this. First: Temporal prosperity is *utterly insufficient to satisfy the cravings of the human soul.* “A man’s life (happiness) consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth.” “What shall it profit a man?” &c. Secondly: Temporal prosperity often *leads to spiritual adversity and ruin.* How often it happens that the higher a man rises in worldly things, the lower he sinks in moral destitution and degradation. Hence He does not pray for this tem-

poral prosperity, nor does He anywhere encourage it. On the contrary, His command is, "Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven and his righteousness." Another truth implied here is:—

II. That there is a COMPLETE UNITY OF INTEREST BETWEEN HIM AND HIS FATHER. "*And all mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them.*" The first part of the verse is: First: True, *absolutely*. God is the universal Proprietor; all spiritual existencies, even the highest, are bound to say with Christ, "*All mine are thine.*" We have nothing that we can call our own. We are trustees, not owners. The second part of the verse is: Second: True, *subjectively*. "*And thine are mine.*" Genuine goodness in all good creatures has both an instinct and capacity to appropriate not only all things that belong to God, but God Himself. What the old Hebrew saint said, all genuine saints can say. "The Lord is my portion, oh, my soul." Though in a worldly sense they may be indigent, in a spiritual sense they "inherit the earth," they possess all things. "All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are your's; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." The language of deep love to its object is, "*all that is mine is thine.*" "His are the mountains, and the valleys his." I rejoice in thy possessions, more, I claim them as my own. This appropriation of God in His universe, is the glory of man. "*I am glorified in them.*" Another truth implied here is—

III. That SINCE THE DEPARTURE OF CHRIST FROM THIS EARTH THE PRESERVATION OF A GOOD MAN IN HIS GOODNESS, DEPENDS UPON THE AGENCY OF THE GREAT FATHER.

*“And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.”* The meaning is, “I have taken care of them until now. Now I am leaving them, and commend them to Thee.” Two things are here indicated. First: The *way* of keeping them. *“Through thine own name.”* That is, His moral character, which is His name. His moral excellence is at once the power to convert them to goodness and to “*keep*” them in goodness. Would that preachers would practically recognise this, and preach like Paul at Athens, “Him declare I unto you,” not their little dogmas and speculations. Secondly: The *reason* for keeping them. *“That they may be one as we are.”* We are one in a supreme purpose, inspiring spirit, and moral character. Let them be kept that they may be one with us. Real unity of soul consists of oneness of aim, spirit, and character. What attraction is in the material world, binding all things together, the vast and minute, the proximate and the remote, disinterested love is in the moral system. Another truth implied here is:—

IV. THAT AMONGST THOSE WHO ARE GIVEN BY GOD TO THE SCHOOL OF CHRIST, THERE ARE BAD MEN AS WELL AS GOOD. *“While I was with them in the world I kept them in Thy name, those that Thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the Son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled.”* Judas was with the disciples, and perhaps there has ever been a Judas in all the communities of Christian discipleship. In the gospel field there are tares as well as wheat, in the fold goats as well as sheep, in the net the unclean as well

as the clean. All are God's gifts. Bad men as well as good are the *property* of God, He can give them. Bad men as well as good are under the *direction* of God. Judas did not go into the school of Christ by accident but "*that the Scripture might be fulfilled.*" Bad men as well as good are *employed* in the *service* of God. Judas did a useful work. Bad men in the school of Christ *must meet with a terrible end*. Judas was lost, the "*son of perdition*" went to his own place. It is better for a man to fall from the level sands than from a lofty cliff; it is better for a soul to fall into ruin from the corrupt world, than from the height of Christian privilege and profession. Another truth implied here is:—

V. THAT THE GRAND DESIRE OF CHRIST IS THAT ALL HIS DISCIPLES SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN HIS JOY. "*And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have My joy fulfilled in themselves.*" Christ had joy. Though in one sense He was a "Man of sorrow and acquainted with grief," no man ever walked this earth who had so much joy as He had. The joy of an innocent conscience, of an approving God, of a disinterested love, of close and unbroken fellowship with the Everlasting Father. He had "meat to eat" of which other men knew nothing. Now His desire is that all His disciples should participate in this joy, and at last all His faithful ones will "enter into the joy of the Lord." As there is but one glory in all moral beings—the glory of moral excellence, there is but one joy, the joy of the Lord. Another truth implied here is—

VI. THAT the faithful carrying out of Christ's desire WILL EXCITE THE WORLD'S HATRED. "*I have given them*



*thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.*" (See my remarks on chap. xv. 18 v.). The "*world*" here of course does not mean the physical world, but the unregenerate race of mankind, and this world is a world of practical atheism, practical falsehood, practical carnality, practical selfishness. It is in direct antagonism to the ethical teaching and the ideal life of Christ. The man therefore who will act out the teaching of Christ will ever come in direct antagonism to all the passion and prejudices of the world. "If the world hate you," says Christ, "ye know that it hated Me before it hated you." Yes, it did hate Him with a malignant and mortal hatred. The conduct of a truly godly man acts upon the sensibilities of the corrupt as the noontide sun on diseased eyes, as strains of music on diseased auricular nerves.

*(To be continued in our next.)*

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### Union with Christ.

"They love their blessed Leader. Not more close  
 The branches cling unto the parent tree  
 Than are His followers bound to Christ.  
 They loose, like Him, their hold on earthly things. They free  
 Their hearts from the strong bonds of selfishness  
 And yield for general good their private weal.  
 Where'er is want, despondency, distress,  
 They have the hand to toil, the heart to feel;  
 'Tis thus their Saviour taught them. They are one  
 With Him, and in their souls His image bear  
 Rejoicing in the likeness. As the sun  
 Doth spread his radiance through the fields of air,  
 And kindle in revolving stars his blaze,  
 He pours upon their hearts the splendour of His rays."

*J. C. Upham.*

## Sermonic Saplings.

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### THE CRY OF HUMANITY FOR REST.

“OH ! THAT I HAD WINGS LIKE A DOVE ! FOR THEN WOULD I FLEE AWAY AND BE AT REST.” *Psalm* lv. 6.



SOMETIMES there is a difficulty in connecting Psalm and History. In this case there seems to be none. Most of our Biblical authorities agree in assigning this Maschil of David's, to that time of peculiar and aggravated trouble which grew out of the rebellion of his son Absalom ; trouble which was greatly intensified by the treachery of his own chief counsellor, Ahitophel. The record of this sad passage in David's life is 2 Sam. xv. In that transaction there certainly met many of the elements that constitute a great sorrow. There was filial wickedness and ingratitude on the part of his beloved son Absalom, who corrupted the hearts of the people, spreading among them disaffection and disloyalty. There was the base betrayal of his sovereign's interest on the part of Ahitophel, who treacherously transferred his allegiance and his talents from the father to an ambitious and unscrupulous son. Then came the climax, when, under these circumstances, in the presence of a growing rebellion, the monarch is obliged ignominiously to flee from his own capital, to escape the cruelty of his heartless persecutors. History presents few more touchingly tragic scenes than that of Israel's great and once popular king, seeking safety in flight, accompanied by a body-guard of faithful friends,

whom no traitor's arts could corrupt. We see him quitting mount Zion, crossing the Kedron, ascending mount Olivet, on his way to the wilderness. Climbing its steep with covered head and with bare feet, weeping as he went up; while all the people with him, covered every man his head, and followed weeping as they went up. No wonder that good men have seen in David here a type of Christ, who was basely betrayed by the Judas whom he had trusted; who also, in deep sorrow, went over this same Kedron, and up the ascent of the mount of Olives, when conspiracy was gathering its coils round Him, when He was near His Passion, when His soul was sore amazed, and soon became "exceeding sorrowful even unto death." To return to the text, "O that I had wings."

Now doves were plentiful in Palestine. As Thomson tells us in "The Land and the Book," they were very strong and swift of wing, and could soon fly away from the haunts of cruel hunters, finding shelter in the clefts of rocks, or in the solitude of the wilderness.

David had doubtless often marked their rapid movements. It is just possible that a flock of doves might have been disturbed by the clamours of the insurrection, and were now seen by the distressed king in full flight for the wilderness under the sad circumstances. Envy of their swift pinions produced the exclamation, "O that I had wings of a dove, then would I flee away."

How often have these words been uttered since! Let us consider them, and a lesson or two they suggest.

I. THE EXCLAMATION IS PERFECTLY NATURAL. It certainly was so here. David was, as we all know, in a noble sense a "man after God's own heart." He was well formed for public life; bold, brave, and enterpris-

ing. A man of an active mind, of great resources, full of schemes for the welfare of his people, the honour of the nation, and the glory of God. There was nothing about him, as king or chieftain, weak, timid, or pusillanimous. The man who as a stripling encountered and slew the giant Goliath, and who as king had often led the hosts of Israel on to victory, was not the man who would lightly complain of his lot, or long for relief from the duties and cares of the State. But there is a limit to human endurance. And thus even David, weary at last of the cares and disappointments of his high station, weary of the treachery and ingratitude of men whom he had loved, served and trusted, longed to have done with society, to seek shelter from the gathering storm, and find safety in some desert's depth from the fury and fickleness of mankind.

And can we wonder if crowned heads in the present day sometimes sigh for peace, and give utterance to a similar wish? We are thankful, of course, for the loyalty and honour which happily surround the person and throne of our beloved Queen. But who can reflect on the spirit of disquiet and disloyalty on the Continent of Europe,—the Nihilism, with its persistent operations, deep laid schemes, whose avowed object is to annihilate all existing forms of civil government—who can think of what has lately happened at St. Petersburg—of the spirit that animates men in Berlin and Constantinople, Vienna, or of the latest catastrophe of this kind at Washington, which has just startled and horrified the world,—who can think of these things without feeling it is often still true, “Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown?” How well at times might many a monarch sigh for privacy and peace.

Then again, who can think of our leading Statesmen without believing that sometimes they must feel a deep craving for rest? We know they are men of great power, of large nature, willing to bear the burdens of their high office—men to whom God gives “strength equal to their day.” Yet with all that, when you think of the heavy pressure and of the responsibilities, the vast interests committed to their care, when you think of the incessant labour, of the play and the passions of parliamentary interests, of the ever recurring friction of debate, of the great anxieties inseparable from high office, must not the most enduring, and the most elastic sometimes wish from some pavilion from the strife of tongues? Perfectly legitimate the cry, “O that I had wings.”

Who can think of the daily life of our merchants with all their ventures, investments and transactions—of our professional men in the law, daily renewing the contentions of the courts—men of business in any department; the daily work, the unflagging attention, the incessant competition, the wear and tear of trade in crowded city or almost anywhere else—without feeling that without anything of indolence or the mere spirit of repining, thousands of men and women legitimately long to get out of the care and clamour of life; to get far away into the refreshing silence and solitudes of nature, where the wearied spirits and jaded faculties may find rest.

There is one element of human life which more than almost any other evokes this aspiration, and that is what we call *worry*. It enters into some lives *far more* than into others. There are many of our brethren who by Providence are called upon to work hard in daily hand labour, but with whom when the labour is fairly done



it is fairly paid, and there is an end ! There is happily in their case not much of what is meant by worry. You are in this to be honestly congratulated ; for if you ask many men, from artisans and upwards, through all the ranks of trade and work, what is it that eats into the springs of life, that steals sleep from the eyes, that frets the soul and chafes the temper, that constantly rises from the surface of life like poisoning mist from a swamp, they will tell you it is not *regular work* of back or brain, that we can stand, but the almost constant irritation and nameless worries of mind that attend it, so that the very prospect of a week's quiet would be charming. But as duty, stern duty to myself and my family, chains me down to this spot day by day, how natural is the exclamation : O for a few days peace and quiet. "O that I had wings like a dove."

II. THE WISH IN NOT ALWAYS CREDITABLE. It was perfectly so in the Psalmist's case. It is perfectly right in the case of thousands. To many an overworked mechanic and tradesman—to many a busy clerk and shopkeeper—to many engaged in any honourable handicraft, a short respite from duty would be not only enjoyable, but also invaluable physically. The jaded faculties would recover vigour. The weakened nerves would be strengthened ; the body, too long bent to its utmost tension, would recover power. Men would bring back to their work in life faculties braced up by change, a whole nature invigorated by rest. The whole being is thus lightened, and better work is subsequently done.

None know this better than men whose vocation is mainly mental, keeping the higher faculties of intellect and feeling on full stretch. Judges, barristers, lawyers, Christian ministers, artists, authors. Even our Lord

Himself was thus mercifully considerate to His Apostles. On one occasion, you will remember, when they had been by the Master's orders far away in the country, on an evangelizing expedition, working hard, what said the Master on their return? "Come ye apart, and rest awhile!" How welcome such an invitation must have been from Him! How reviving the leisure which He would provide and enrich by His company, His conversation and blessing.

Sometimes, however, there comes a craving for quiet, when the origin of the craving is not legitimate, and is not honourable. Are there not men sometimes to be met with who are of a discontented, restless, spirit: they quarrel with the arrangements of Providence; complain of their lot in life; settle down to no kind of fixed work; nourish their discontent, and long for an ignoble repose? You may encounter others who are not only discontented, but utterly disinclined to any kind of labour. These are idlers in the vineyard, drones in the great hive of society. It may be that circumstances compel them to labour, but they are destitute of all proper manly spirit, have no sympathy with society and its higher aims, with their fellow-citizens and their honourable enterprises; they refuse to join any public movement for the people's welfare, or if they do, their zeal is soon exhausted, they take an early opportunity to withdraw, and under some poor pretence set up a weak-hearted cry for exemption and rest; they long for the sweets of retirement before they have known much of strenuous toil, and would quit the battle-field before they have struck a blow at the enemy. Of such conduct in a working world like ours, where labour is the appointed law of life, and nothing noble can be done

without it, one can only say it is unworthy and indicates a spirit of ignoble cowardice. Instead of trying to shirk their appointed task, such men should shake off the demon of idleness, throw themselves somewhere into the struggle, and resolve to "work while it is called day."

Instead of crying out, "O that I had wings like a dove"—O that I had the spirit of *a man*, both to *discern* clearly *what* the Lord has given me to do, and the *spirit* of activity and obedience to go and do it, and do it perseveringly, while life and health are given, so that when rest comes it may be enjoyed as a boon after honest toil, and not wear the aspect of a premature or dishonourable repose.

III. SOMETIMES IT TURNS OUT TO BE A MISTAKEN WISH. Paley has written it, that "Man is a bundle of habits." To a *large* extent this is true. And the truth is sometimes strikingly illustrated in the matter now under consideration. The writer has known more than one case in which, yielding to the fascination of ample leisure, men left the busy scenes of an honourable and lucrative occupation, but made the change prematurely. They had felt the exhaustion, the weariness and worry inseparable from business life, and imagined that they had only to wing their way into retirement, and they would find it a region of contentment and pleasure. In many cases it is so, but in some it is far otherwise. The mind has lost one object and not found another. If a man be an intelligent Christian, he will find abundant objects of interest in connection with the Church of Christ, with the management of its affairs, the care of the poor, or in efforts to do good generally, he will find plenty of scope for his talent, plenty of ways to employ

his leisure, with vast advantage to others, and yet without any painful effort to himself; or if his mind has been cultivated by reading, and by intercourse with society, methods of filling up his ample leisure in doing good to others will multiply beneath his hands, and break out before him in all directions, so that his life shall be a great blessing to society. But if a man have none of these tastes, habits, and acquirements—if he have lived entirely to and for himself, only to get gain—if he knows nothing and cares nothing about Christianity and the Church, and the school and religion; and if he have no resources in himself, no love of books, no interest in the moral and social welfare of others, or in the political and intellectual movements of the age, then let him not too soon bid adieu to his business, to his buying and selling, lest he should find the coveted retirement be to him a wilderness indeed—one set of interests relinquished and no other to take their place. The mind becomes a blank, time a burden, and leisure rather a bane than a blessing.

Occasionally too, do not men find out their mistake in another way? Under circumstances of trial and great pressure of duty the cry goes forth, “O that I had wings.” You determine to cut the cable that ties you to local engagements and arduous duties, and you flee away as fast as the wings of steam can carry you to some secluded spot—“to a lodge in a vast wilderness, some boundless contiguity of shade.” But lo! when arrived there, have you not sometimes found that your cares and anxieties, from which you would fain escape, have travelled with you by the same train or boat? They are still the troublesome and intrusive companions of your solitude on hill or dale, as they were with you

in the crowded streets of London. Well, what have you to do then? Is there no remedy? Is there no relief? Must work, weariness, and worry be our inevitable doom? a ceaseless drag on the wheels of life? You need not go out of this Psalm for the answer—for the best of all antidotes to this complaint. David knew it. He not only repaired to the wilderness, *he betook himself to God*. (See Psalm 16-17.) *He prayed*, and like Luther in later days, he prevailed. In verse 22, the fugitive, but devout king, from the depths of his own experience, gives this blessed piece of advice to all anxious souls: “Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee: He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.”

And here, surely, comes in the right place for a word to those (and they count the majority of society) who cannot “flee away and be at rest.” We must not forget them; it would be selfish and unpardonable. Oh! how many thousands of the sons and daughters of toil among us must toil on, with no prospect of bodily or mental rest for four days together, till it is found in the grave! They need it bitterly. To them life is one long scene of labour. The Christian Sabbath brings the only break, their one brief truce in the life-long battle! They hear of green fields, of health-giving places along our island coast, where wind and waves are wafting health and strength. They see and read the manifold, large-lettered advertisements that invite wearied citizens to recruit their wasted energies on northern highlands and lakes, or at southern and western towns that look out on the free and bracing sea—and among them are many of our fellow Christians. Alas! such luxuries are not for them! Is there



nothing for them? For too many absolutely nothing of the outward. Yet I trust that in all Christian hearts there is at least the feeling of true sympathy, and very often from Christian hands there goes forth some help of Christian charity. But for the *Christian* worker and toiler, however constant the toil and brief the boon of rest—one thing thou canst do, even as this king did—"Cast thy burden on the Lord." In more ways than one He is the great burden-bearer, will bear thine, and *He* will sustain thee. There may not be an easier place, a lighter load, but He can and will send the divine equivalent, greater *strength* to bear it.

To many of you, dear brethren, a different word may, in addition, be commended. We are now well into the season of the summer holidays. Very many among us have been working well—hard and long, in their various vocations. Occasionally the burden feels heavy, the demands of duty are numerous, and its calls peremptory. Soul and body, sometimes, are ready to sink beneath the pressure. The weekly day of rest has been to you a great boon. How would you go on without it? How often have you sung in the Sanctuary with sincere pleasure, "Come bless the Lord whose love assigning," "Welcome sweet day of rest," &c. Some of you, indeed, in your devotion to Christ and His work, hardly allow yourself any leisure time. The only rest it brings is a change of occupation. You have, and will have, your reward. The one day in seven, with its cessation from labour, does prepare men for the work of the week. But as the year goes on it is felt by many, especially in these days of excitement and rapid living, that some more extended leisure is needed in justice to the worn mind and enfeebled frame. It is needed, and by many

more than can happily be taken. I ask, brethren, as you think of the condition of thousands (who must toil on without respite), is there not a ground and a call for earnest gratitude to the merciful Providence that enables *you*, for a good season, to flee away and be at rest? To get clear away, far from "the madding crowd." Somewhere by mountain, valley, lake, or sea, you will probably find yourselves, enjoying the wonders and beauties of Nature, which the Creator has given us with so lavish a hand. Somewhere where no call will be heard that is a summons to work, no bell will ring that means business, letters will hardly find you, a newspaper not often read, and there will be no committee to attend.

May our thoughtful gratitude keep pace with our providential privileges. And whenever, like David (though not for his cause), we flee from the city to the mountain, or to any solitary place, and obtain refreshing rest to body and soul, may we be enabled to return, in the spirit of joy and thankfulness, to resume the appointed duties of life.

People sometimes find in this world that change of scene is disappointing, it does not always bring a change from bad to good, or from good to better. They complain of the present position. They are ready at any moment to quit it, in the hope that the spot on which their hearts are fixed, will turn out a haven of rest from all the storms of life. "O that I had wings" . . . When the flight is accomplished and the change of scene and circumstances is made, experience teaches that they have only exchanged one set of difficulties for another. So it often is. Christians are then often taught the truth practically, that here on earth we are not to

find our truest, richest rest. Here in this world, whatever the social position, the wealthy and happy Christian will be prepared for labour, and will not expect permanent repose, nor build his nest too high, nor make it too snug. There is a rest that remains for the people of God. *In Cælo quies.* And present trouble often prepares men for its enjoyment. After the labour and change, the work and weariness of this life are done, after all its swell and storm are over, we hope by divine grace to reach the better country, "that is an heavenly," "where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest."

*Brixton Hill.*

D. JONES, B.A.

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### A SONG OF DEGREES (5) GOD IN THE TROUBLES OF THE GOOD.

"IF IT HAD NOT BEEN THE LORD WHO WAS ON OUR SIDE," &c. *Ps. cxxiv. 1-8.*

BECAUSE some of the imagery in this Psalm resembles some of David's expressions, he has been credited with its authorship. But there is good reason to believe that the composition belongs to a later author. The story of the Hebrews abounds with incidents capable of suggesting the composition (2 Kings xviii. 13; Isa. xxxvii.; Esther ix.) Probably it points to the time when Cyrus' proclamation gave the captives the hope of returning to their own land, and thus be set free as "*a bird out of the snare of the fowlers.*" This psalm presents to us the Almighty as *acknowledged* as a Deliverer from great troubles, as *praised* as a Deliverer

from great troubles, and as *trusted* as a Deliverer from great troubles. The Almighty is here presented to us—

I. AS ACKNOWLEDGED as the Deliverer from great troubles. “*If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, now may Israel say: if it had not been the Lord who was on our side,*” &c. The words represent the great troubles from which the Almighty wrought deliverance, as SPRINGING OUT OF THE HOSTILITY OF MAN. The hostility of man is represented by two figures (1) As the rage of wild beasts. “*When men (it should be man) rose up against us then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us.*” The human enemies were as ferocious and greedy as the hungry beasts of prey. So ravenous indeed were they, that instead of first killing their prey they opened wide the mouth and “*swallowed*” them up. So with the enemies of the good. Satan is a “roaring lion, going about seeking whom he may devour.” “My soul is among lions.” The hostility of man is represented (2) As the rage of rushing waters. “*Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul.*” How vivid the description. First the water is overwhelming, then the torrent going over the soul, then the “*proud waters,*” dashing their furious volume over them. Is there a reference here to the Flood, or to the Red Sea? As Englishmen in reading this we naturally think of the Spanish Armada. “When the Spaniards, on the defeat of their Invincible Armada, stung with disappointment, and wishing to detract from the honour which our brave defenders had acquired, exclaimed that the English had hitherto little reason to boast, for if the elements had not fought against them they

would certainly have conquered us, Queen Elizabeth improved the hint. She commanded a medal to be struck, representing the Armada scattered and sinking in the background, and in the front the British fleet riding triumphant, with the following passage as a motto round the medal: 'Thou didst blow with Thy wind and the sea covered them.' " "We may still remember," says Milton, "in our solemn thanksgiving, how for us the Northern Ocean, even to the frozen Thull, was scattered with the proud shipwrecks of the Spanish Armada, and the very maw of hell ransacked, and made to give up her concealed destruction ere she could vent it in that horrible and damned blast."

The community of good men in every age has often had strong reason to chant this ode. "*If it had not been that the Lord was on our side.*" Where should we have been had not the Lord been "*on our side*"? The Almighty is here presented to us—

II. AS PRAISED as the Deliverer from great troubles. "*Blessed be the Lord.*" The deliverance has come; it has been great, and great should be the praise. "*Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers; the snare is broken and we are escaped.*" This may apply (1) To *temporal* escapes. Israel in Babylonian exile was a "*bird in the snare of the fowlers.*" Mark well the figure. "The fowler has prepared his snare in a skilful manner. The bird enters it unconscious of danger; the net is thrown over it, and in an instant liberty is lost. There it lies, the poor bird, its little heart throbbing wildly, and its little wings beating vainly against the net. It is completely at the mercy of the fowler, and escape is impossible." How often are men temporally in this condition! With instincts



hungering for freedom, and powers for a wide range of action, enthralled and encaged by circumstances, secular embarrassments, domestic trials, bodily afflictions, crushing poverty. These often tie us firmly down to some contracted spot on earth. This will always apply (2) To *spiritual* escapes. Without figure, the unregenerate soul is in thralldom, and the gospel alone can deliver it. Two remarks are suggested concerning its liberation. It is a liberation, First: From a *miserable bondage*. It was like a "*bird in the snare of the fowler*." The unconverted soul is a spirit in prison. It is "in chains of darkness," the darkness of ignorance, pollution, and woe. (1) It is a bondage of the man himself. You may enchain the body and leave the soul free. No iron link, no granite wall, can confine the soul. But when the soul is in bondage the man himself is in bondage. (2) It is a bondage associated with a sense of guilt. Many a prisoner in material dungeons is free from a sense of guilt, and has a blessed consciousness of innocence; but a soul in prison feels its guilt as a black threatening cloud covering its heavens. (3) It is a bondage from which God alone can deliver. Men have been delivered from material prisons by the clemency of the sovereign, by political revolutions, by their own skill and strength, and by the all-conquering arm of death. But none of these can deliver a soul. God alone can snap the chains and open the prison door. It is a liberation, Secondly: Into a *happy freedom*. See the lark freed from the snare soaring into the infinite blue, chanting her joyous notes of freedom, with the world as a little speck beneath her eye. She is the emblem of a freed soul. What is the freedom of the soul? The privilege to act freely?

No. The paralytic may have this, still he is a slave. The pardoned criminal who lies dying in his dungeon may have this, but still he is a slave. No, it is not in the privilege to act freely, but in the *capacity* and *privilege* to do so. The freedom of the soul consists in the freest exercise of its intellectual faculties and spiritual powers. The freedom of the soul consists in being unconstrained by any force but love for the Infinite. It is a "glorious liberty." Glorious on account of the Hero who secured it, glorious on account of the immortal blessedness it secures. "*Blessed be the Lord who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth.*" The Almighty is here presented—

III. AS TRUSTED as the Deliverer from great troubles. "*Our help is in the name of the Lord who made heaven and earth.*" This is the grandest moral result of the whole, it is that moral experience of the soul that makes heaven everywhere, trusting in the Lord; "trusting in Him who liveth for ever." This trust is always well founded; founded First: On His *past goodness*. He who delivered in the past will deliver in the future. His goodness, like Himself, is unchanging. This trust is founded, Secondly: On His *glorious name*. "*Our help is in the name of the Lord.*" His name is Himself. Here it is as proclaimed to Moses. "The Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious," etc. "They that know thy name shall put their trust in Thee." This trust is founded, Thirdly: On His *unbounded resources*. "*Who made heaven and earth.*" He who piled up the mountains of this little globe, poured forth its oceans, crowded every part of it with countless tribes of life, he who launched into immensity, and sustains and controls untold millions of globes, ten thousand times

larger and brighter than this, He has resources we may safely depend. "Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not neither is weary? There is no searching of His understanding. He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might He increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall, but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint."

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### A SONG OF DEGREES (6) THE COMMUNITY OF THE GOOD.

"THEY THAT TRUST IN THE LORD SHALL BE AS MOUNT ZION, WHICH CANNOT BE REMOVED," &c. *Ps. cxxv. 1-5.*

By general consent this Psalm was composed after the Babylonish captivity, and refers to the troublous times of Nehemiah. "The rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem had commenced, but the work was carried on under most discouraging circumstances. The inveterate opposition of the Samaritans has been frequently noticed. They maligned the Jewish builders and the Persian, and in concert with their heathen neighbours, they had recourse to open violence. The builders were under the necessity of working with a sword at their side, so that when the trumpet sounded, they might at once repair to the place where an attack was made, and with

flashing weapons repel their adversaries. But with all these precautions the poor and persecuted Hebrew Colony endeavouring to build the temple of their God, and the city of their fathers, would assuredly have been destroyed, had there been no gracious interposition of heaven. Their condition may be described with singular fidelity and power in the words of the preceding Psalm. If the Lord had not been on their side, their enemies would have swallowed them up alive."

In this psalm we have the *security of the good insured*, and the *prosperity of the good invoked*.

I. THE SECURITY of the good INSURED. It is of the good that the writer speaks. Who are they? "*They that trust in the Lord.*" This is the characteristic of the good everywhere, and at all times. "Some trust in chariots, some in horses," &c. This trust means unbounded confidence in the character and procedure of God, this is the essence of piety. The words suggest that such are—First: Firmly established. "*They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever.*" The mount on which the temple was built stands as firmly to-day as it did when Abraham offered up Isaac on its lofty brow. No earthquake has shattered it, no storm has hurled it from its foundation; it is the everlasting mountain. Its stability is only the emblem of those who trust in God. "God is our refuge and strength." "On this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The words suggest that such are Secondly: Safely guarded. "*As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people, from henceforth even for ever.*" "It is said that to a traveller approaching Jerusalem the towers stand

against the sky, and seem to overtop the neighbouring hills; but any one in the city itself would perceive that the hills in every direction are higher. On the east the Mount of Olives is nearly 200 feet above the city, while an outlying ridge bends round on the north. The ground rises gently on the west, and on the south there is the Hill of Evil Counsel. If the Holy City has its surrounding mountains, the nation has a far surer defence in the Lord, for the "mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but thy kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of thy peace be removed, saith the Lord (Isaiah liv. 10; Zech. ii. 4-15)." (*Prebendary Young*). The words suggest that such are Thirdly: Ultimately delivered. "*For the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous.*" "*Rod*" here means sceptre, and the "*lot of the righteous*" the land of promise. The generic idea is that the power of the wicked shall not always extend to the good; one day the community of the good shall be out of the dominion of wickedness for ever and ever. "He shall bruise Satan under our feet." Though the power of the wicked—"the rod of the wicked"—may fall at times upon the good, it shall not "*rest*" there. In this psalm we have—

II. The PROSPERITY of the good INVOKED. First: The invocation specifies the character of the good. "*Do good unto those that be good, and to them that are upright in their hearts.*" "*To be good*" is to be "*upright in heart*," and to be "*upright in heart*" is to be right in our loves, our aims, and activities. The "*goody*" are common, the good are rare. Secondly: The invocation pictures the character, and foretells the doom of the wicked. Who are the wicked? "*Such as turn aside*



unto their crooked ways." What is their doom? "*The Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity.*" "All that turn aside from the straight path and wander into bye paths (see Judges v. 6), that stray from Thee and incline to Thy foes, Jehovah will destroy; lead forth into the ways of destruction (see lviii. 8; cix. 23; comp. Matt. vii. 22; xxiv. 51).—*Canon Cook.*

"With stately towers and bulwarks strong,  
Unrivalled and alone;  
Loved theme of many a sacred song,  
God's holy city shone.

Thus fair was Zion's chosen seat,  
The glory of all lands;  
Yet fairer, and in strength complete,  
The Christian temple stands.

The faithful of each clime and age  
This glorious Church compose;  
Built on a Rock, with idle rage  
The threat'ning tempest blows.

Fear not; though hostile bands alarm,  
Thy God is thy defence;  
And weak and powerless every arm  
Against Omnipotence."

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IMMORTALITY OF GOODNESS.—"Thousands of men breathe, live, and move, pass away, and are heard of no more. Why? They do not partake of good in the world, and none were blessed by them; not a line they wrote, not a word they spoke could be recalled, and so they perished. Will thou thus live, O man, immortal? Live for something. Do good and leave behind a monument of virtue that the storm of time cannot destroy. Write your name in kindness, love, and mercy on the hearts of thousands you come in contact with. You will never be forgotten. No, your name, your deeds, will be as legible on the hearts you leave behind as stars on the brow of evening."—*Chalmers.*

## *Germens of Thought.*

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### THE PREACHER'S FINGER-POST.

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#### Herod and John the Baptist: the Freedom and the Slavery of the Sinner.

“ AT THAT TIME HEROD THE TETRACH HEARD OF THE FAME OF JESUS, AND SAID UNTO HIS SERVANTS, THIS IS JOHN THE BAPTIST; HE IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD; AND THEREFORE MIGHTY WORKS DO SHOW FORTH THEMSELVES IN HIM. FOR HEROD HAD LAID HOLD ON JOHN, AND BOUND HIM, AND PUT HIM IN PRISON FOR HERODIAS' SAKE, HIS BROTHER PHILIP'S WIFE, FOR JOHN SAID UNTO HIM, IT IS NOT LAWFUL FOR THEE TO HAVE HER. AND WHEN HE WOULD HAVE PUT HIM TO DEATH, HE FEARED THE MULTITUDE, BECAUSE THEY COUNTED HIM AS A PROPHET. BUT WHEN HEROD'S BIRTHDAY WAS KEPT, THE DAUGHTER OF HERODIAS DANCED BEFORE THEM, AND PLEASED HEROD, WHEREUPON HE PROMISED WITH AN OATH TO GIVE HER WHATSOEVER SHE WOULD ASK. AND SHE, BEING BEFORE INSTRUCTED OF HER MOTHER, SAID, GIVE ME HERE JOHN BAPTIST'S HEAD IN A CHARGER. AND THE KING WAS SORRY: NEVERTHELESS FOR THE OATH'S SAKE, AND THEM WHICH SAT WITH HIM AT MEAT, HE COMMANDED IT TO BE GIVEN HER. AND HE SENT, AND BEHEADED JOHN IN THE PRISON, AND HIS HEAD WAS BROUGHT IN A CHARGER, AND GIVEN TO THE DAMSEL: AND SHE BROUGHT IT TO HER MOTHER. AND HIS DISCIPLES CAME, AND TOOK UP THE BODY, AND BURIED IT, AND WENT AND TOLD JESUS.”—*Matt. xiv. 1-12.*

In this narrative of loathsome depravity two great facts are developed—

I.—The amazing FREEDOM HEAVEN ALLOWS wicked men in this life. Herod,

one of the worst men of his country and his age, is allowed, First: To reach *regal authority*. This is the highest position in human society.

Herod was the King of Perea and Galilee, the political master not only of some very good men, but of John the Baptist and of Christ Himself. Every age presents examples in abundance of wicked men rising even from the depths of obscurity to some of the highest offices in the State. No restraint is put on their cupidity or ambition. Herod, one of the worst of men, is allowed, Secondly: To use his authority in *imprisoning and murdering one of the best of men.* "Of those born there doth not appear greater than John the Baptist." One might have thought that the moments such monsters reached out their hands to inflict injury on the good, they would have been crushed by a thunderbolt from heaven. But the Herods, the Julians, the Neros, have this permission. Herod

is allowed, Thirdly: To imprison and murder one of the best of men *because he did his duty.* It was because John charged him with crime. "For John said unto him, it is not lawful," &c. This amazing freedom which God allows to wicked men in this life serves, First: To indicate the *deep depths of human depravity.* It serves, Secondly: To show that nothing *but the Gospel can effect a reformation.* Science, education, poetry, philosophy, all have tried, but failed. It serves, Thirdly: To suggest that there must *come in the government of God a day of judgment.* It cannot be that evil will always go on thus. It serves, Fourthly: To assure us that the world would become a Pandemonium were *all restraints on the wickedness of the heart removed.* There are restraints, conscience, holy examples, public

opinion, wholesome legislation, &c. Notice—

II. — The amazing SLAVERY TO WHICH SIN REDUCES MEN in this world. This great king Herod was after all a miserable slave. First: A slave to his own *lusts*. The lust excited by the unchaste manners of his wife's daughter prompted him to the wicked deed. Sin reduces men to animalism, they are governed by the flesh. Secondly: A slave to *public sentiment*. He feared the people. In proportion to the lack of virtue there is in a man or woman the more disposed they are to bow to the opinions of others. Thirdly: A slave to his *guilty conscience*. "At that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of

Jesus and said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist, he is risen from the dead." What led him to imagine that John the Baptist had risen? Was it his *creed*? No, he was a Sadducee. Was it his *wish*? No, his wish would have been never to see John the Baptist any more. No, it was his guilty conscience. A guilty conscience will preach to the sinner doctrines which it never believed before, and spread out before his vision ghastly objects of which before he had no conception. The language of the sinner under the excitement of a guilty conscience is:—

"Memory backward she is flying  
With the swiftness of a thought,  
From oblivion's grave she is raising  
Crimes that I have long forgot."

### Christians Walking Harmoniously on the Road of Life.

"SO HE SENT HIS BRETHREN AWAY, AND THEY DEPARTED; AND HE SAID UNTO THEM, SEE THAT YE FALL NOT OUT BY THE WAY." *Gen. xlv. 24.*

THIS Scripture may be appropriately employed to enforce on those who bear the name of Christ,

the spirit they should cherish and display towards each other. There were *special* reasons why, considering *who* they were, that Joseph thus addressed, and what the circumstances were in which they were placed—they should not “fall out by the way.” There are *corresponding* special reasons suggested and sustained by the teaching of the New Testament why professing Christians should not either. Let us trace the parallel. They whom Joseph thus addressed were all—

I. MEMBERS OF THE SAME FAMILY. They were all the sons of one man. Such they declared themselves to be. They were brethren. This was the relation they bore to each other. This is the relation Christians bear to each other. They having been born of God, and having “received the adoption of sons,” are

brethren. To them, as such, the Scriptures speaks in this wise : “Love as brethren” (1 Pet. iii. 6). “Be kindly affectioned,” &c. (Rom. xii. 10). “Let brotherly love continue” (Heb. xiii. 1). They were all—

II. PARTAKERS OF THE SAME GRACE. Joseph no longer treated them as he had done aforetime. He no longer upbraids them, even for the wrong they had done him. Tender and touching the language he used in speaking of that wrong (ch. xlv. 4, &c.). Tender and touching the acts by which the affection he felt for them was confirmed (v. 15). *They were forgiven offenders.* So, too, are Christians. “Having forgiven you all trespasses” (Col. ii. 13). “In whom we” &c., “forgiveness of sins” (Eph. i. 7). And this privilege is to influence



its possessors in the direction indicated by the text, as we learn from such passages as these: "Let all bitterness," &c. (Eph. iv. 31). "Put on," &c. (Col. iii. 13). Forgiven ourselves we are to be forgiving. This is the lesson taught by the parable of the unmerciful servant.

They were all—

III.—ASSOCIATES IN THE SAME SERVICE. Restored to the possession of his favour, Joseph now gives them a commission (xlv. 9, &c.). He assigns them a certain work in which *all* were to be engaged: a work for the successful prosecution of which *concerted* action was required, and that would therefore be marred if identity of feeling was not preserved. Now this, their new position of honour and responsibility,

is a type of the position into which all are introduced who are "accepted in the beloved." They are called to do their Lord's bidding. Each is a servant of the divine householder. Each is a soldier in the army of the Captain of their salvation. Concerted action is required, to the existence of which strife and discordant feeling are fatal. He is your *true* yoke-fellow, who is of one heart with you. Euodias and Syntyche must be of the same mind in the Lord if they are to be efficient coadjutors in carrying on the work of the Lord. They who would "strive together" for the faith of the Gospel need to be of one soul (Phil. i. 27).

They were all—

VI.—TRAVELLING TO THE SAME HOME.

J. F. POULTER, B.A.

## Spurious Sanctity.

"THEN LED THEY JESUS FROM CAIAPHAS UNTO THE HALL OF JUDGMENT. AND IT WAS EARLY; AND THEY THEMSELVES WENT NOT INTO THE JUDGMENT HALL, LEST THEY SHOULD BE DEFILED, BUT THAT THEY MIGHT EAT THE PASSOVER." John xviii. 28.

It is noteworthy that John does not record Christ's trial before Caiaphas, the Synoptists do this\*. In these words there are three things that deserve notice at the outset: the *scene*, the *ceremony*, and the *sentiment*. The *scene* is here designated the "*Judgment-hall*," in the new version translated "palace." This was the official residence of the Roman governor. His private home was at Caesarea, but during the Passover season there was such an influx of strangers and consequent general excitement that he felt it his duty to be present in the City, that peace and order might be

preserved. The *ceremony* referred to here is the Passover, "*That they might eat the Passover.*" Because all the other Evangelists assure us that Jesus had eaten the paschal lamb the night before, viz., on the Thursday evening, John's statement here that it was eaten on the present day, viz., on the Friday, is difficult to be understood. Sceptics have discovered a damaging contradiction. Various theories have been propounded by Biblical critics for solving the difficulty. I agree with a modern expositor, who says that "the simplest and most satisfactory solution is found in the different meaning of the word "passover." It, no doubt, often did signify simply the paschal lamb. But it also had a more extensive meaning, so as

\* Remarks on this trial will be found in my "Genius of the Gospel." See page 666.

to include the entire festival of the Passover week. Such is the obvious meaning in John ii. 13, 23 ; vi. 4, xi. 55, xii. 1, xiii. 1. So also in 2 Chron. xxx. 22, "They did eat the feast seven days offering peace-offerings." Now during the Passover Week there was to be on each day a burnt offering, two young bullocks, one ram, and seven lambs ; also a meat offering, and one goat for a sin offering. Unleavened bread was to be eaten through the week. There was also the *chigagah*, which was a festive thank offering made by private individuals and families. To partake of these during any day of the festival was to keep or eat the Passover. That John did not disagree with the Evangelists in holding the supper on the night of Christ's betrayal to be the passover, we have good historical proof.

For his disciple Polycarp, in a discussion of the question occurring in his day, expressly declared that John himself celebrated the Easter Supper on the fourteenth of Nisan, the time of the Jewish Passover." (On the whole subject read Excursus F., in Bishop Ellicott's "Commentary for English Readers," vol. I page 559). The *senti-*ment is vastly more important than either the scene or the ceremony. "*And they themselves went not into the Judgment-hall (or the praetorium), lest they should be defiled.*" They sent Christ in the custody of Roman officers, these remained without "*lest they should be defiled.*" These wretches who were thirsting for the blood of Him who was "harmless," "holy," undefiled, "separate from sinners," who was the Son of God Himself, were afraid of being ceremoni-

ally “*defiled*” if they entered the apartments of a heathen majesty. Here is *spurious sanctity*, and in relation to this wretched state of mind, I predicate the following facts:—

I.—It is COMMON. How many religionists there are in Christendom, of almost every creed and sect, who are afraid to enter certain places, lest their holy souls should receive a taint! Papists stand aloof from all Protestant scenes of worship, and Protestants from a similar sentiment avoid all Churches of the Catholic order. Nor are the numbers few amongst the adherents of the Episcopal Church of England who would not enter the Churches of Nonconformist communions, lest they should be defiled. As if, forsooth, those who every Sunday proclaim themselves in the great con-

gregation to be “miserable sinners,” felt themselves at the same time so pure as to dread defilment in entering Churches where such men as John Foster, Robert Hall, John Howe, Caleb Morris, and Dr. Chalmers preached, where Milton sang and Cromwell knelt! Nor are Nonconformists, free from this miserable sentiment. There are thousands of narrow souls in the regions of dissent who avoid Episcopal Churches lest they should receive a taint. These men, of this spurious sanctity, who are they? Are they lawyers, who never take advantage of their clients, merchants who never practise dishonesty on their customers, doctors who never impose on their patients, tradesmen who never cheat, masters and mistresses who never deal unkindly and unjustly with their

servants, aristocrats who are never haughty, overbearing and licentious? I trow not. The chances are, the high probability is that the men of spurious sanctity belong to these classes. For no order of men had the Divinest of all Teachers, and the noblest of all characters, a profounder contempt. "Woe unto you," &c. To His all-pure and piercing eye, they were "whited sepulchres." Verily the most soul-polluted men and women I know are those of this class. I could not trust them. All healthy moral virtues have quitted their natures, and their graces are all dummy. I predicate another fact in relation to this *spurious sanctity* and that is—

II.—IT IS IRRATIONAL. First: It is founded on an absurd idea of *localities*. It pre-supposes that some places are in them-

selves more holy than others. Is St. Peter's in Rome more holy than St. Paul's in London? Or is St. Paul's in London more holy than the Methodist Chapel in the City Road, or any other place, shop or sanctuary? Nay, all places are alike, every spot on which we tread is "holy ground," for the Holy God made it, and is present with it every minute. True, the purpose for which a certain place has been consecrated, or set apart, may be good or bad, but the place is the same whether it be for a Cathedral or a market. The notion that one place on this round earth is more holy than another is an offence to reason, an insult to common sense. Secondly: It is founded on an absurd idea of *human obligation*. It supposes that man is bound to be more holy in one place, or in one period, than in another, more



holy in the Church than in the shop, more holy on the Sunday than on the other six days of the week. This notion, which is terribly prevalent, is a superstitious phantom, a preposterous fiction. Man, though of complex elements and faculties, is but one being, and *moral* in all and evermore. Even all his physical voluntary actions have a moral quality, and so have all his volitions, whether referring to the movements of bodily organs or of mental faculties. "Whatsoever he does in word or deed," whether in business or in worship, he is bound to do all to the "glory of God." Thirdly: It is founded on an absurd idea of *mind*. It supposes that the human mind is some passive substance, that can be defiled by some outward element or agent, irrespective of its own choice and effort, a kind of fabric, a piece of ware or

stone that you can daub or wash. But it is not so. Nothing outward can affect the mind irrespective of itself, no force can soil or cleanse it independent of its own efforts. It can make itself filthy in scenes and services considered the most holy, it can wash itself from its pollution in scenes considered the most corrupt and vile. There is a power in the body, when in a healthy state, to appropriate whatever goes into it from external nature that is wholesome and necessary, and to expel that which is noxious and superfluous. The soul has a power analogous to this—a power to appropriate the wholesome and to expel the injurious. This power we call the transformative. Let us use it rightly—use it as Noah used it, who, amidst the blasphemy and ridicule of a corrupt generation, "walked with God" and

fulfilled a noble destiny ; as Paul used it at sceptical Athens and dissolute Corinth, and in Pagan Rome, who, from experience, left the world this testimony : “ All things work together for good to them that love God.” Another fact I predicate in relation to this *spurious sanctity* is—

III.—IT IS PERNICIOUS. First : This spurious sanctity is a *positive injury to its subject*. The religionist who moves about the world with the dread of having his soul “*defiled*” by outward things, is like a man who enters a sick-room, afraid of inbreathing the disease of the sufferer, he is nervous and feels oppressed by the atmosphere, his buoyancy and brightness for the nonce have quitted him. The spurious saint lacks naturalness, buoyancy, and elasticity of soul, there is no joyous humour in the eye, no manly ring

in the voice, there is the pietistic face, the whining voice, and the dreamy eye. He is afraid of being “*defiled*,” and he shuns the scenes of innocent recreation, he trembles all over in the presence of heretics and schismatics. Poor creatures, quit the world and retire to the scenes of monks or nuns ! Secondly : This spurious sanctity is a *calumny on true religion*. The religion of Christ is happiness. “ These things have I spoken unto you that your joy may be full.” He came to bring the soul out into perfect freedom and to pour into it “ joy unspeakable and full of glory.” I am disposed to believe that the teeming thousands of sanctimonious men and women that crowd churches and chapels, talking in sepulchral tones and pulling long faces, are far greater obstructions to the progress of Christianity than

all the sceptics of the day, for they misrepresent the religion of the Son of God.

CONCLUSION : — Among the many practical lessons that may be drawn from this subject there is one applicable especially to parents. It is always a deeply anxious period in the history of a pious parent when the time comes to send his children out in the wide world to engage in such pursuits as may be the most conducive to their advancement and usefulness in life. This profession is thought of and given up because of the temptation with which it is associated. That business, though lucrative, is renounced because of the fallacious and dishonest principles on which it is conducted, and the depraved circle, with which it stands connected. There is not a single department of secular life that can be thought of as suitable for his child, that is not beset with perils to his innocence and virtue. And when, after much anxious thought

and prayer, he decides on that which is least objectionable on moral grounds, still he is anxious. Which is the way to meet this parental difficulty? Teach the child that his Maker has endowed him with powers of mind and thought that will enable him to stand against all outward temptation; that if he is true to the spiritual nature which kind heaven has given him, he can pass through the most fiery assaults of the devil unscathed, move through the most polluted scenes without a moral taint. Teach him that his safety is in reliance upon the right use of his own faculties and in the blessing of his God. Teach him that it is not the unchaste conversation, the filthy song, the profane expression that may go into his ear, that will defile him: but the use he makes of these. Teach him that he has a power to turn wickedness to his own spiritual advantage, that he may—

“Gather honey from the weed,  
And make a moral of the devil  
himself.”

# Notes on the Epistle to the Colossians.

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REFERRING our readers for all historical and critical remarks about this Epistle to the able Commentaries of LIGHTFOOT and ELLICOTT, and FARRER'S more recent "*Life and Work of St. Paul*," it is nevertheless necessary to carry into and throughout our consideration of the entire Epistle, what was its main purpose. Throughout St. Paul is dealing with the twofold evil that had arisen in the Colossian Church—an error half Judaic, half Gnostic—an error that was theological and practical. It arose from the wrong conception of matter as inherently evil, and as demanding intervening mediators between the material system of things and God; and at making abstinence from contact with material things, as far as might be possible, very incumbent on the godly. This error has its modern analogies in Sacerdotalism, and in Pietism. To combat the error then and now the *Plenitude of Christ* must be preached; Christ the fulness therefore the all sufficient Mediator, therefore too the all sufficient Consecrator of the material system. The errors of the Ritualist, and of the Recluse are both met by this great fact.

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## No. XVI.

### AN EXHORTATION TO PRAYER.

"CONTINUE IN PRAYER, AND WATCH IN THE SAME WITH THANKS GIVING; WITHAL PRAYING ALSO FOR US, THAT GOD WOULD OPEN UNTO US A DOOR OF UTTERANCE, TO SPEAK THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST, FOR WHICH I AM ALSO IN BONDS: THAT I MAY MAKE IT MANIFEST, AS I OUGHT TO SPEAK."—*Col.* iv. 2, 3, 4.

PAUL had been, as we have seen, describing noble and difficult duties of husbands, children, &c. He evidently felt they were so noble that they ought to be attained, and yet so difficult that he must at once suggest one way to their attainment. He has shown the

goal, now he shows the path—that path is prayer. Husbands, wives, all who would become what I have described, "Continue in prayer." In his exhortation to prayer we may notice—

I.—SOME ELEMENTS IN ALL TRUE PRAYER. And of these elements there is

in the very front: (1) *Constancy*. "Continue steadfastly," as the Revised Version has it. Not fitfully, occasionally, irregularly, but with steady constancy, pray. ( $\alpha$ ) There *ought* to be constancy because of the *need* there is. The need is perpetual, for the duties to be discharged to which prayer alone can help, and the dangers to be avoided, from which prayer alone can deliver, are ever with us. ( $\beta$ ) There *can* be constancy, because the *opportunity* is always granted. There are avenues of religious help a man may close against his brother; but not this. Excommunicated, exiled, tortured, imprisoned, he can still pray. Wherever God is, and a human soul is, there prayer can be. So Daniel, Jonah, Stephen, found. Another element is (2) *Wakefulness*, "watching." Not as a sleeper, but as a sentry,

must the man be who prays. Understanding, emotion, will, must be awake as he who guards the city is awake to hear the first footfall of a foe, to catch the first shadow of a danger. Not in dreamy lethargy can men pray. "No arrow of prayer can reach the sky that does not fly from a heart strongly bent as some elastic bow." Another element is (3) *Gratitude*. "With thanksgiving." Thus the conception of prayer is evidenced, beyond that of mere petition, to that of intercourse. Prayer becomes a Eucharist. Indeed, thanksgiving is the crown and goal of prayer. Elsewhere the apostle similarly exhorts, "In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your request be made known unto God."

II.—A SPECIAL SUBJECT FOR INTERCESSION. Paul thus bespeaks prayer for



himself and his fellow workers, both to link himself in humbleness of heart to the Colossians. It is as though he said I need prayer as well as you. And doubtless he also asks their prayers because he is conscious of necessity for such help as prayer can bring. For himself and his fellow workers he asks: (1) *Prayer that they may have opportunity for work.* "That God may open unto us a door." To the mystery of the gospel there is the great obstacle of minds closed by prejudice, hearts closed by antipathy. The preacher, like his Lord, has to stand at the door and knock. He asks: (2) *Prayer that shall be sympathetic with their sorrows.* For he reminds them that he is "in bonds." In every one of the epistles of his captivity the apostle mentions this coupling chain which he

felt to be thwarting, galling, humiliating. And their prayers must seek, either that the chain be broken, or the prisoner be strengthened to endure. He asks: (3) *Prayer that they may have fitness for their work.* The one pressing want of their condition was "boldness." Sometimes the main want is wisdom, sometimes patience, sometimes gentleness. Here, because of all that was around him and before him, he felt the supreme want was courage. And, indeed, when is this not wanted by those who have to proclaim such a message as the gospel, to such souls as proud, selfish, self-willed men, for such a Master as the Christ who travails till victory is won?

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# Seeds of Sermons on St. Paul's Epistle to Philippians.

HAVING gone through all the verses in the Epistle to the Ephesians (see "Homilist," Vol. xxii. to xxviii.), we proceed to develop, with our usual brevity, the precious germs of truth contained in this letter. The following remarks, as a standing introduction, may contribute some portion of light to the whole Epistle:—Notice (1) *The residence of the persons addressed.* Philippi—whose ancient name was Crenides—was a city of Macedonia, and called after the name of Philip of Macedon, because he rebuilt and fortified it, B.C. 358, and afterwards colonised by Julius Cæsar, who invested the population with the privilege of a Roman City. It was the first place in Europe where the Gospel was preached by Paul, an account of which we have in the sixteenth chapter of the Acts. It was during his second missionary tour, and about A.D. 53.—Notice (2) *The occasion of the Epistle.* The contributions which the Philippians had made towards supplying the Apostle's necessities when a prisoner at Rome, evidently prompted its production.—Notice (3) *The scene from which the Epistle was addressed.* That it was from Rome where he was a prisoner is clear, from chapters i. 1-13, iv. 22. It would seem from the Epistle that he was expecting a speedy decision of his case, and hoped to obtain his release. Epaphroditus had been despatched to him from the Philippian Church with pecuniary contributions for the Apostle's relief, and on his return the Apostle entrusted this letter for conveyance. This would be about A.D. 63.—Notice (4) *The general character of the Epistle.* It is all but free from any censure, and breathes a warm and generous feeling through every part. The Epistle gives us the impression that the Philippian Church was one of the most pure, consistent, and generous, of that age. About 40 or 50 years after this Epistle was written, we are informed that Ignatius, on his way to martyrdom passed through Philippi, and was most warmly received in that city.]

## No. IX.

### A LIFE OF CONSISTENCY, UNITY, AND COURAGE.

"ONLY LET YOUR CONVERSATION  
BE AS IT BECOMETH THE GOSPEL  
OF CHRIST, &c." *Phil.* i. 27, 28.

The Apostle here means that whether he should come to them or not—for he was not certain on the point—they should be careful to pursue a certain course of conduct. "By supposing," says Bengel, "this or that future contingency men may persuade themselves that they will be such and such as they ought to be. But it is better always without evasion

to perform present duties under present circumstances." Their obligation to live a Christly life was independent of the contingency of the circumstances of his life. He might visit them, or he might not; he might remain in the flesh or he might depart. In any case he urges on them consistency of conduct, unity of life, and fearlessness of soul. He urges on them—

#### I. CONSISTENCY OF CONDUCT.

"Let your conversation (*politenesthe*) be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ." I take this

to mean, fulfil your duties as citizens, worthy of the Gospel of Christ. This is a most comprehensive view of the duty of those who profess to believe in the Gospel; it means act worthy of your profession, be consistent. You profess to believe in a God: act worthy of that profession, be reverent, be devout, be thankful. You profess to believe in Christ: walk worthy of a true disciple, be docile, be studious, be loyal. You profess to believe in future retribution: regulate your present conduct in accordance with that faith, subordinate the world to the soul, and consecrate the soul to Almighty Love. In chap. iii. 20 Paul says, "Our conversation is in heaven;" that is, our citizenship is in heaven. The genuine disciple of Christ is now a citizen of heaven, he is ruled by the laws of heaven, he enjoys the rights of heaven. This being so, how super-worldly and morally stately should be our deportment here. The discrepancy between the creed of Christian men and their daily conduct is a terrible sin and a tremendous curse. He urges on them—

II. UNITY OF LIFE. "That whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast

in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel." Here is First: Unity of *heart*. "In one spirit, with one mind" (soul.) Unity of heart consisteth not in uniformity of opinions or beliefs, but in identity of supreme purpose and love. There is only one meeting and mingling place of souls, and that is in the object of paramount affection. Here is Secondly: Unity of *labour*. What is the labour? "Striving together for the faith of the Gospel," or more properly "with the faith of the Gospel." (1) The united labour must be *steadfast*. "Stand fast." One fixed, irrevocable purpose; no vacillation, no distraction. Let the union of heart be so complete, and the souls so welded together, that the united purpose shall be immovably fixed. (2) The united labour must be *earnest*. "Striving together." The metaphor is drawn from the games, and whether the games were those of wrestling or racing, they involved almost an agony of earnestness. In Christian work all labour without earnestness is morally worthless in its character, and useless if not pernicious in its results. (3) The united labour must be with *one instrument*.

"Striving together for (*with*) the faith of the Gospel." There is no destroying evil, "putting away sin," and promoting true virtue and holiness only with the gospel. Philosophy, legislation, and literature have tried and failed. The Gospel is the "power of God." Here is true unity, unity of heart, unity of labour, unity of instrument in the work. Paul urges on them—

### III. FEARLESSNESS OF SOUL.

"In nothing terrified by your adversaries." "Terrified." "The original word is strong—starting or flinching, like a scared animal. This fearlessness in the absence of all earthly means of protection or victory is a sign of a divine strength made perfect in weakness (2 Cor. xiii. 9), not a complete and infallible sign (for it has often accompanied mere fanatic delusion), but a sign real as far as it goes, having its right force in harmony with others. The effect which it had on the heathen themselves is shown even by the affected contempt with which the Stoics spoke of it as a kind of 'madness,' a morbid habit, a sheer obstinacy." *Dr. Barry*. Two remarks are suggested concerning this Christian fearlessness. First: It bodes good to its possessor, but evil to its

adversaries. It is "an evident token of perdition" to the opponents of the Gospel, but "salvation" to its genuine disciple. A man who has well-founded moral fearlessness of soul is safe amidst hostile hosts, and his very fearlessness will make hostile hosts fear and tremble. Secondly: It is well founded, and often nobly developed. It is the gift of God, it is not an inherent stoical self-sufficiency. It is given as a provision for the suffering condition to which Christians are subject. It is given to Christians, not only "to believe on Christ, but also to suffer for His sake." "In the world ye shall have tribulation" &c. How splendidly developed was this fearlessness of soul in Paul. "Having the same conflict which ye saw in me and now hear to be in me." They saw his sufferings (Acts xvi. 24.) "None of these things move me."

CONCLUSION.—Such was the course of life which this Apostle in the prospect of death urged on the Philippians, consistency of conduct, unity of life, and fearlessness of soul, and all these are as binding on us and as necessary for our good as they were in the case of the Philippian Church.

# Homiletical Breviaries.

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No. CCCXLVII.

## The Morally Sound and Unsound in the Universe.

“THEY THAT ARE WHOLE NEED NOT A PHYSICIAN, BUT THEY THAT ARE SICK. I CAME NOT TO CALL THE RIGHTEOUS, BUT SINNERS TO REPENTANCE.”—*Luke* v. 31-32.

There are two classes of rational and responsible beings in the universe, the morally sound and the morally unsound. I. The **MORALLY SOUND**. Christ here calls such the “*righteous*.” These embrace two classes. First: Those who have *never been morally unhealthy*. These comprehend all those celestial intelligences who retain their pristine innocence, seraphs, angels, archangels, their natures have never been tainted with disease. Secondly: Those who have been *perfectly restored* from a state of unhealthiness. Such are the “Spirits of just men made perfect.” Once they were diseased, but they have been cured, perfectly cured. II. The **MORALLY UNSOUND**. These, again, embrace two classes. First: Those who are *insensible to their disease*. Such, perhaps, are the vast majority of the human race, forming that mighty generation who are “pure in their own eyes.” Their insensibility to their diseased condition *aggravates* the sadness of their state. The worst cases of fever and consumption are those where the patient fancies himself well. Insensibility to pain is a fatal symptom, it is so with souls. Sinners who are unconscious of their malady live in neglect of the Physician who alone can heal them, and of the remedies which alone can make them sound. Of such Christ says, the “*whole need not a physician*.” Secondly: Those who are *conscious of their malady*. Such are those to whom the Gospel has carried a conviction of sin, like the thousands who, on the day of Pentecost, cried out, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” To these Christ comes as a Physician, because they feel their need. What a Physician is He to such! *Always ready, ever accessible, exquisitely tender, infinitely skilful*, rendering at all times His services “without money and without price.”



## No. CCCXLVIII.

## The Highest Life.

“AND NOW, LITTLE CHILDREN, ABIDE IN HIM, THAT WHEN HE SHALL APPEAR, WE MAY HAVE CONFIDENCE, AND NOT BE ASHAMED BEFORE HIM AT HIS COMING.”—1 John ii. 28.

The term “*little children*” is a term of endearment. John was a man of love, those who loved Christ he loved dearly. “*And now, little children,*” or better, my little children. The good have a property in the good. The words imply three things: I. AN ACTUAL EXISTENCE IN CHRIST. You cannot “*abide*” in Him unless you are actually in Him. What is it to be in Christ? To be in His *school* as His disciple, in His *family* as His brethren, in His *character* as His imitators. Spiritually, all men live more or less in the character of others. The existing generation lives in the character of its predecessor, loving children live in the character of their parents. To live in His character is to live as the branches in the tree, as the members in the head, &c. To live in His character, actuated in all things by His Spirit, guided in all things by His principles, is the highest state of existence for man. “If any man be in Christ he is a new creature,” a new creation. The words imply: II. THE POSSIBILITY OF LOSING THIS STATE OF EXISTENCE. If not, why should we be exhorted to “*abide*?” First: *The constitutional freedom of the soul implies the possibility.* It would be contrary to the constitution of the moral mind to be bound inevitably to any state. It is the characteristic of the moral mind that it can change its orbit, it can reverse its course. Secondly: *The corrupting influences of society are hostile to this state of existence.* The maxims, the spirit, the tendencies of the age are inimical to this life, the moral atmosphere of a corrupt world is not congenial to its growth and prosperity. Thirdly: *The exhortations of Scripture imply the danger of its decay.* “Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” “Be steadfast,” &c. The words imply: III. THE NECESSITY FOR CONTINUING IN THIS STATE OF EXISTENCE. “*When He shall appear we may have confidence and not be ashamed at His coming.*” Or, according to the New Version, “That if He shall be manifested we may have boldness, and not be ashamed before him at His coming.” The idea is that a continuance of this high state of existence, this life in Christ will enable you to meet Him with unabashed confidence. Sooner or later He will come to all. *He comes to all at death.* “Be ye therefore ready,

for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh." Would you meet Him without the agitations of terror, without the burnings of shame, then "*abide in Him.*"

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No. CCCXLIX.

### The Abiding Earth.

"THE EARTH ABIDETH FOR EVER."—*Ecclesiastes* i. 4.

We may look at the durability of the earth: I. AS A CONTRAST. It abides in contrast with very much whose only constancy is the constancy of change. (1) The earth abideth in contrast with *its own ever-varying appearances*. Every year tells of the change of the seasons in which earth changes her raiment, and what does not geology tell of cycles in which the earth has changed her countenance and form beyond all that we can describe. But the earth—whatever is true of her dress and of her countenance, is "established and cannot be moved." (2) The earth abideth in contrast with *human structures*. Houses, villages, cities, citadels, where are they? Some utterly swept away: some in ruins: all destined to decay. (3) The earth abideth in contrast with *the lives of individual men*. To say nothing of what the ocean or the mountains utters to man about the fleetingness of his little sojourn here, the mere babbling brook laughs at his mortality.

"Men may come and men may go,  
But I flow on for ever."

(4) The earth abideth in contrast with *the existence of nations*. The history of Babylon, Egypt, Rome, are but as shadows passing in swift succession over the surface of the enduring earth. The earth, like a dial, tells by these human shadows, how short the hour of man's life, how brief the day of a nation's history. We may look at the durability of the earth, II. AS A TYPE. It is a type of much that will outlast itself. (1) Of *Man*. His animal nature may pass; his mental and spiritual being shall continue. He shall

"The darkening universe defy,  
To quench his immortality."

(2) Of *Truth*. Here again, like man's body, like the moods of the seasons, the forms of truth may change.

"Our little systems have their day,  
They have their day and cease to be."

But Truth is eternal. (3) Of *God*. All that is most lasting in nature is used to illustrate some attribute of God—rocks, sea, &c., but when they have told all that remains to be uttered about the Great God in all His works, "They shall perish, but Thou remainest."

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

## *Literary Notices.*

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[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books, it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

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### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

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THE NEW NAME, and other Sermons. By Rev. David Davies, Weston-super-Mare. London : Yates & Alexander.

This volume, which is just issued from the press, has on it many of the marks of the higher order of sermons. We say the higher order, because there is no room for doubting that the sermons of our time include the coarsest and crudest as well as the noblest utterances of the English language. But Mr. Davies is evidently a man of the genuine hearted and clear headed type. Hence he deals with the variety of topics over which the twenty-nine sermons of this book range, with a simplicity of aim, a boldness of touch, a picturesqueness of style, and a practicalness of tone that must invest any pulpit with an unusual charm. Whilst of course the printed page lacks much that the sermons possessed in the pulpit, it is not too much to say that we find here a good deal of the courage of the prophet, the reverence of the priest, and the insight of the poet. For the first we might specially turn to his discourse on "The Temptation of our Lord," for the second, to that on "The Burning Bush," for the third, to that on "The Duty of the Church towards its Young Members."

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CHARLES KINGSLEY : Letters and Memories of His Life. Edited by His Wife. Abridged Edition. Kegan Paul, London.

Deep and wide as was the influence Charles Kingsley exercised at the time of his too early death, there is little doubt that to-day that influence is deeper and wider still. And this not only because of the continued circulation of his writings—his Sermons, Essays, Lectures, Novels, Poems—but largely because of the biography Mrs. Kingsley gave us of her great husband. That biography at once

took its place by the side of Stanley's *Life of Arnold*, and Stopford Brooke's of Robertson, and with them made multitudes familiar with the strength and beauty of some of the strongest and most beautiful lives of our time. But that biography was large, and, though it has run through nearly a score of editions, it was too expensive for all to buy, and perhaps too voluminous for all to read. We rejoice therefore to call attention to a smaller edition, which Mrs. Kingsley has prepared, we believe specially for young men. There is the condensation of some portions of the former edition, but there are also some valuable additions of matter which was not before forthcoming. Our readers would especially be interested in some striking passages giving Mr. Kingsley's "*Views on Preaching to a Village Congregation*,"—views, we need scarcely say, as unconventional and manly as they are altogether wise. We could scarcely use words too strong to counsel the more thoughtful of our readers to obtain this noble woman's biography of a noble man, and so at once to become at home with a life that will not fail to convince them that the age of Saints and of Heroes has not passed.

STORIES OF THE CITY OF LONDON. By MRS. NEWTON CROSLAND.  
London: W. Allen & Co., Waterloo Place.

"I am well aware," says the authoress, "that each of the following stories either has been, or might be, made the subject of a separate instructive volume, but elaborations of history, with all their wide-spread ramifications, are only really acceptable to the mature and already well informed reader. To the young there must ever be a gradual acquirement of all sorts of knowledge, and those histories which are most diffuse, and those biographies which are most ample, do not always make the deepest impressions on youthful minds. Remembering this, my aim has been to re-tell these true stories graphically, yet succinctly, believing that interest may be maintained through forty pages when it would flag under a more prolonged effort, and knowing that it is that in which we are really interested which the memory retains most faithfully." These stories, which are really well told in such a way as to interest old as well as young readers, are about London Bridge—The Temple Church—The Royal Exchange—The Tower—The Great Plague of London—The Great Fire of London—The Gordon Riots, and the Thames Tunnel. The volume contains illustrations which are all strikingly expressive.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO SATAN. By STANDISH GREY, M.A.  
London : Kerby & Endean, Oxford Street.

A quotation from the author's preface will put the reader in possession of the character and aims of this book. "Deeply impressed with the conviction of the rapid growth in our land of irreligiosity under the garb of true religion, as well as of scepticism and godlessness openly avowed, I send forth this book, not as being a full exposition of even some of the errors of our own time publicly accepted, nor yet as essays against palpable evil doctrine, but as a warning against the subtle teaching which, while pretending to be the result of advanced knowledge, and of the higher development of free thought, is in reality a masterpiece of delusion whereby Satan seeks to blind man's apprehension of God's truth, and by pandering to man's desire after more accurate deduction from reason to lead him by paths that appear right in a way that is the direct opposite to the revelation of God." The author labours with a manifestly good purpose, and with evident sincerity and earnestness.

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INDEX RERUM. By REV. JOHN TODD. London : C. Higham, Farringdon Street.

This work is, of course, well known, for what theological student has not read the priceless volume entitled, "The Student's Manual," by the author? The author's introduction and directions for using the index are invaluable. The suggestions of Rev. Mr. Neil, the editor, as to the use to be made of the appendix, enhance the value of the work not a little. Mr. Higham deserves the gratitude of students for introducing this invaluable work.

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THE LADIES' MULTUM IN PARVO FLOWER GARDEN. By SAMUEL WOOD. London : Crosby & Lockwood, Paternoster Row.

This work shows what to do to get the most enjoyment out of a small *parterre* at the least expense, with instructions how to form and plant the miniature rosary and the compound carpet garden, also how to make the ladies' miniature nursery ground and the fernery, how to raise seedlings; and contains a list of the most troublesome insects, and how to destroy them. This book will be a most valuable help to those—and their number is increasing every day—who are interested in the healthful, instructive, and delectable work of gardening.



THE GERMAN PREPOSITIONS, WITH THE CASES THEY GOVERN.  
 GERMAN PHRASEOLOGY. By SAMUEL GALINDO. GEOGRAPHY :  
 By REV. B. J. JOHNS. London : Crosby, Lockwood & Co.,  
 Stationer's Hall Court.

These are three very useful little manuals on the subjects of which they treat. He who is studying the German language could not possibly do better than to possess and consult the two former little volumes, and he who is endeavouring to attain a correct geographical knowledge would act wisely to have the little book on geography always at hand during his studies.

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COMMENTARY ON ROMANS. By F. GODET, D.D. VOL. II. Translated by REV. A. CUSIN, M.A. Edinburgh : T. & T. Clark, George-street.

The first volume of this work we noticed in "Homilist," Vol. xlvii. This volume completes the author's commentary on the epistle, is worthy of the former, and worthy also of the high reputation the author has won as a critic and Biblical exegete. The following extract on the words, "*Vessels of wrath fitted for destruction*," will not only indicate the author's minute discriminations in style, but be interesting to our readers, as throwing light upon a very difficult passage of Scripture. "The term signifies," according to Lange, "vessels on which wrath falls," that is to say, which He will break in His wrath. But verse 21, and the completely parallel passage in 2 Tim. ii. 20, show that the point in question is the use and, consequently, the contents of those vessels. The meaning is, therefore, all saturated with wrath; not for the purpose of emptying it on others like the angels, who hold the seven vials of divine wrath, Rev. xvi. (Lange's objection), but to taste all its bitterness themselves. The perfect participle *κατηρτισμένα*, prepared, fitted to, &c. has given rise to great discussions: for the apostle does not tell us by whom this preparing was made. Meyer contends that it should be ascribed to God Himself. He supports his view by the regimen following: to destruction, which indicates a judgment of God. But we find in ii. 4, an authentic explanation from the apostle himself on this subject. If the Jews are actually ripe for judgment, he says, it is not the fault of God, who has faithfully pointed them to repentance and salvation: it is the effect of their own hardening and impenitent heart which has changed the treasures of divine

grace into treasures of wrath heaped on them. What answer does Meyer give to this? He holds that the apostle moves between two irreconcilable theories. In chap. ii. Paul stood, it is true, at the view point of human liberty : but here he starts from the standpoint of absolute divine will. But is it probable that a mind so logical as Paul should accept such an irreducible duality of views? And what seems stranger still is that from verse 30 of our chapter onwards, and in the whole of chapter x. he replaces himself anew at the standpoint of human liberty, and reproduces exactly the same explanation as in chapter ii. ! Finally, while in the following verse he directly ascribes to God the preparation of the elect for salvation : "which He has prepared unto glory," he deliberately avoids expressing himself thus in speaking of the preparation of the Jews for destruction. He here employs, instead of the active verb "prepare," with God as its subject, the passive participle "fitted to." The understood subject of this action of fitting, appears not only from ii. 4, but more clearly still, if possible, from the passage 1 Thess. ii. 15, 16 : "The Jews who both killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and persecuted us, and they please not God, and are contrary to all men, forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins always ; but wrath is come upon them to make an end of them." It thus appears who is the author of the present ripeness of the Jews for judgment in Paul's view. It is not God assuredly who has Himself prepared vessels which please Him not, and of which He is in haste to make an end. De Wette even acknowledges that the apostle avoids saying by whom they have been fitted to destruction."

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THE LIFE, TIMES, AND CORRESPONDENCE OF RIGHT REV. DR. DOYLE.  
By W. FITZPATRICK, LL.D. New Edition. In Two Vols.  
Dublin : Duffy & Sons, Wellington Quay.

These volumes present to us a history of the life and times of one of the most remarkable men of the past generation. Dr. Doyle was not only a Roman Catholic Bishop, but a distinguished politician, an ecclesiastical reformer, a consummate orator, and an author of no mean type. This book might be made the subject of many entertaining and highly useful lectures to young men. Dr. Fitzpatrick, it has been truly said, "has followed the example of Boswell and Lockhart, in an exceedingly artistic way ; the plan includes an amount of time, labour, and expense from which most

men would retreat. He felt that the task was a great one, and for six years he continued his labour of love, gathering his materials slowly, but surely; collecting, collating, investigating, soliciting—thinking no mansion too lofty at which to knock for information, no cottage too lowly to enter in search of well-authenticated facts, until at last, having thoroughly satisfied himself that nothing more could be done, he has sent forth his volumes, to secure admiration for his ability, industry, and enthusiastic perseverance, and to give us an undying memorial of what really great minds can do when excited by patriotic feeling and Christian zeal. Dr. Fitzpatrick has varied his matter in a pleasant way, chequering his narrative with the grave and the gay, and relieving the more sober tone of his subject by racy anecdotes and characteristic traits, so as to make not only a very able exposition of facts, but an agreeable repertory of brilliant “*jeu de mots*.”

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VOICES OF THE DEAD. A Sermon on the late Dean Stanley. Preached in Augustine Church, Clapham, By GEORGE SEXTON, LL.D. London: Wade & Co., Ludgate Arcade.

It is no wonder that preachers of all Churches have hastened to lay on the tomb of Dean Stanley their wreaths of honour and affection. Some of them have been very beautiful. But so far as we have seen no tribute has been altogether more fitting than the sermon Dr. Sexton preached in the Augustine Church on the Sunday evening after the Dean's death. The discourse combines a most interesting *resumé* of the Dean's history and an able analysis of his character and gifts with just that clear, vigorous and philosophic statement of the lessons of the “noble life and peaceful death” which we should have expected from Dr. Sexton. We commend the sermon to those who desire a deeper insight into the spirit and genius of two of the best preachers of the modern pulpit.

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EARLY EDUCATION. By W. H. BAINBRIGGE. London: James Nisbet & Co., Berners Street.

This is the substance of four lectures delivered in the public hall of the Collegiate Institution, Liverpool. They refer mostly to the education of infants and youths in the early stages, and shows how much physiological science may assist parents and teachers in developing the faculties of the young. It is an invaluable book of its kind, and every mother should study it, and take directions from it in the management of her children.



## *Leading Homily.*

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### THIRSTING AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS.

“BLESSED ARE THEY WHICH DO HUNGER AND THIRST  
AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS, FOR THEY SHALL BE FILLED.”  
*Matt.* v. 6.

**T**HE sermon on the mount is one of the earliest scenes in Christ's public ministry. Yet a great deal of the highest importance had gone before it, for events followed one another very rapidly after Christ's first appearance as the great divine human teacher and sufferer. The baptism by John seemed already a far-off event, followed, as it was, by Christ's personal conquest over sin in the wilderness. Deliverance from the power of evil was no longer a possibility—it was an accomplished fact. Then began the Saviour's miracle-working, symbolising and attesting the supernatural character of His person and work. His fame as a great healer spread throughout the land, attracting crowds from all parts. And now the opportunity seemed to have arrived for Christ to promulgate the principles of His new kingdom to men. The chapter from which I have taken my

text begins with the words, "And seeing the multitudes he went up into a mountain." What mountain this was we do not exactly know. Dean Stanley thinks it was probably the "Horns of Hattin," an elevation rising about 60 feet from the plain, and within a short distance of the Galilean lake. Tradition has pointed this out as the Mount of the Beatitudes since the time of the Crusaders. Wherever it was, it was some convenient rising ground or platform from which Christ addressed the throngs whom His healing powers had gathered around Him. "And he opened his mouth and taught them." We may picture to ourselves the beauty and grandeur of the scene. The cripple, who had thrown away his useless crutch at the first glance of his Saviour, the blind man who now beheld for the first time the loveliness of earth and the glory of the heavens, thanks to His gracious touch, the lunatic and the devil-possessed men and freemen once more by means of the same gentle influence, the sick and the afflicted, and the tormented from every quarter on whom He had shed His healing rays; all these, together with the curious wondering crowd, were looking up with awe struck, expectant faces at the Great Physician who had come amongst them. "Who was he? What was he?" The whisper ran round. "Is he a magician from Persia, or a demon from Hades?" "Nay, surely," said others, "we know this man." "Is not this the son of Joseph, the carpenter of Nazareth? Are not his brethren living amongst us?" "How then is he able," retorted others, "to do these things which we see?" And the crowd heaved to and fro with excitement and variety of opinion. But every heart beat with a strange emotion. There was an indefin-



able feeling that something more was to follow, that they had not witnessed all that this extraordinary personage could do. The shadow of the coming revelation was on every face, as it gazed at the figure that was standing above them on the hill-side. We may imagine, on the other hand, some of the thoughts that must have passed through the mind of Christ on this occasion. He was about to preach his first sermon to the people. What should He say to them? Below Him was the eager, seething mass of men and women of every class and condition in life, ignorant, degraded, sin-stricken, yet full of hopes, and doubts, and fears of they knew not what. Oh! how His eye must have melted with infinite compassion as He beheld them! He bore in His hand a glorious message from His Father of deliverance from sin, and consolation for all their woes. In what way should He proclaim it? Surely, one would think, there need not have been much hesitation about that. When a man has been condemned to death for the murder of his fellow-man, and the night before his execution a message is despatched from the queen to say that he is reprieved, it is not necessary to bestow much thought on the manner in which it shall be conveyed to the culprit. He will understand it fast enough, however abrupt and ill-chosen the words. One sentence will be sufficient to change his blank despair into unutterable thankfulness and joy. We should naturally have expected, therefore, that Christ would announce at once to the expectant crowd the glad tidings of salvation which He brought. We should have looked for the first utterances of His lips in declarations such as the following: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son,

that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life;" "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." But Christ, who saw into the hearts of all men, knew that they were not ripe for this. Sin had become so ingrained in their very natures that they were unconscious of its existence. To such men forgiveness would have been an idle word, and salvation a mockery. The hard and stony ground must be broken up before it would be fit to receive the good seed of the kingdom. John the Baptist had been a faithful forerunner, crying out in the wilderness, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." But few had obeyed his injunction. Repentance was still the only, the absolutely necessary preparation. The first thing to be done was to lead men to a consciousness of sin, to put before them a higher standard of moral duty than that to which they had been accustomed; in a word, to enable them to realise their actual condition by raising them to a spiritual platform from which they might regard themselves and their deeds in the light of conscience and truth. This is what Christ accordingly did. The sermon on the mount is the moral law of the New Covenant, as the commandments delivered on Sinai were the moral law of the Old. There is a resemblance between the two in many respects. "Think not," says the new Legislator, "that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets, I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." But if there are resemblances, there are also sharp contrasts. The scenery round the two mountains is itself suggestive of difference. Sinai stands out against the sky and the plain in lonely grandeur—awful, unapproachable. A huge chasm divides the

cliff, which seems as if rent by some earthquake, or as if God had for a moment rested His finger there, and the gates of matter had burst open at the touch of its Maker and Lawgiver. A series of irregular mounds forms the boundary and the barrier between it and the level ground below. We can imagine the wanderers from Egypt standing afar off on this level ground, beholding, terror-stricken, the circle of flame that girt the mount that might not be touched, with the thunders of God's artillery pealing in their ears. Standing on the summit, sandy wastes and bare rocks meet the eye in a landscape almost destitute of vegetation. Far removed in its wild solitude from the bustle and business of men, travellers have aptly named this spot the end of the world.

The scenery round the Mount of the Beatitudes, on the other hand, is homely and peaceful in the extreme. No rocky barrier stands in the path of the traveller as he gradually mounts upwards from the lake. There is an easy ascent all the way. And when the top is reached, an expanse of luxuriant vegetation meets the eye on every side. "The valley is a thoroughfare equally for the fishermen of the Galilean lake, and the peasants of the Galilean hills." The crowds that came thither to hear Christ came from Decapolis, and Judæa, and from Jerusalem, and from beyond Jordan. The breath of human life and activity is present everywhere, and seems to bathe the whole scene in living sympathy and beauty.

Everyone will see at once the correspondence between these two aspects of external nature, and the spiritual occurrences of which they were respectively made the arena. The far-off, invisible God of Sinai, clothed

with majesty and darkness, has become, on the Horns of Hattin, the near and human Saviour, the fellow-man of fallen men. See how the throng presses round Him as He moves along, perhaps some tormented one even touches the hem of His garment, and is made whole. Indeed, He is somewhat inconvenienced by the elbowing and the jostling, and so ascends a little space to a ledge on the hill-side, from which He may address the people. For He, too, has a law to promulgate. But it is a law, not so much of outward precepts, as of an inward principle. In obedience to its giver, it gushes from the heart, and fills with its presence and power the man's whole being. Its name is Love—the name of God. Lift up your heads, oh! ye gates of infinite mist and doubt, which have so long been covering with your vapours our Father's smiling face, and let the brightness of the Father's glory, the revealer of the Father's grace, come in. The threatenings of the Old Covenant are exchanged for the promises of the New, the curses of the Old for the blessings of the New. Surely the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.

Such are the general characteristics of Christ's first public utterances. We have now to deal more particularly with one of these: viz., that of my text. This verse has, in common with seven other verses in the beginning of the same chapter, the peculiarity of commencing with the word "Blessed," and the blessing promised in each case is the appropriate reward, we may say, the natural result of the particular character and line of conduct commended. For instance, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy," "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." And

so on of the others. And in our text it is promised that they who intensely long for righteousness shall have that longing amply satisfied.

(1) The first remark I would make is that God has given every man a desire for holiness. To some people such a statement may appear unnecessary, to others extraordinary. The first class must bear with me for the sake of the second whilst I advance two or three considerations to prove the truth of what I say. Let us turn to the 1st chapter of Genesis, 26th and 27th verses. We read there, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness : and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him ; male and female created he them." I believe that statement word for word, as it stands. I have no patience with those theories which convert men into advanced apes, and monkeyfy humanity out of all its glorious prerogatives and divine attributes. God created man in His own likeness. The breath of God became the breath of his nostrils, and with that breath there flowed into man's nature, into his being, into his soul, a streamlet, at any rate, from the infinite ocean of holiness which dwells in the heart of the Almighty. But sin came and mingled its poisonous breath with the pure breath of God, and man's goodness is no longer an unsullied goodness, but sin-stained, marred, and scarred throughout its whole extent. Is it reasonable, however, to suppose that sin has had it all its own way with us, that God has left Himself without a witness in our



souls ! Oh ! no, there is in every man a substratum of goodness which creates in him a consciousness of the evil that is in him, and makes him long for that unmixed goodness, for that absolute perfection which he had when he came fresh from his Maker's hand. There is still, in the very constitution of our natures, a longing for holiness implanted by God. Have we not felt this rise up within us sometimes with irresistible force ? It may be on bended knees, after a powerful appeal from an eloquent preacher, or when some great calamity or the death of a loved one has crushed the worldliness out of us for a time, and our spirits soar up in holy aspiration to our heavenly Father. God has many ways of speaking to us. External nature is an open book to all who can read her secrets. Every tender flower that drinks in the air and sunshine, with all its microscopical perfections, with its delicate colouring and fine pencilling, is a message from God. There is not a leaf that whispers to the passing breeze, or a blade of grass trodden under the unheeding foot, that does not speak to us of His wisdom. And does not His goodness shine out equally everywhere ? He hears the raven's cry and marks the sparrow's fall. He satisfieth the mouth of every living thing. Is not all this a veritable voice from heaven to us ? Do we not ourselves long after a clearer light and a nobler existence, when the infinite wisdom and goodness of God are thus revealed to us on every hand ? God is continually inspiring us with longings for righteousness by the manifestations of His own divine goodness in external nature. Then there is what we call the Providence of God, which is only another way of expressing His presence in our lives. Who has not

felt the hand of God upon him at some time or other in his life? God's hand is upon us every moment, sustaining us and guiding all our affairs, but it is only now and again, at the crises of our existence, as we denominate them, that we feel its presence and power. It may be in the removal of a burden, or it may be in laying an extra one on our shoulders, in some deep sorrow, or in some great new joy, in these and other ways we recognise sometimes the chastening, loving hand of our heavenly Father. And the mere consciousness of God's nearness gives our spiritual life a new impulse, and we feel induced to cry out from the depths of our souls, for that eternal peace which the temptations and troubles of this life have no power to shake, and which we can alone obtain by a more faithful walk with God, and a more whole-hearted devotion to his service. It is in bereavement, however, I think that God's note, "Excelsior," rings out most clearly. There is no household without its vacant chair. What hallowed, sanctifying memories gather round it! It may be a mother's, or a father's, or a wife's, or a son's. There are some homes where nearly all the chairs are vacant. One by one, like autumn leaves, they have dropped off, and those that are gone are more than those that are left. What a great hush is over the house where death has entered! But the hush is only external. The heart is overflowing with tender thoughts of the loved one, and, in spite of tears that must have way, many a holy aspiration soars upwards as we try to picture to ourselves the new home in which the spirit that has just left us, now dwells. I am sure that God's angels are about us at such times, and in the awful stillness we almost fancy that we can hear the beating of their

wings as they whisper to us of the loved one, and of Christ, and of heaven, and of eternity, and immortality. The trial passes, like all trials, and the ever-changing demands of life make us partly forget our sorrow, but as the years roll on those who have gone before us to the other world become continually fairer and nearer and dearer to us. Our spirits often hold communion with them, and in times of temptation and danger we frequently feel that they are by our side like guardian angels to protect us. Oh! what a power in our lives are these loved ones gone before! Through them God speaks to us, and invites us upwards to where He dwells. We long to be with them, and with that longing there comes another, the longing after that holiness in which they now live, and without which no man shall see God. God speaks to us, and inspires us with longings for holiness by the mouth of the dead.

(2) To proceed to my second point. "I admit," I fancy I hear some sceptic say, "that our present condition, the way in which men usually live, is not altogether satisfactory. I quite share your feeling about a something above, and beyond which I cannot help looking forward to, and I have never talked to any one seriously about himself, about his life, or his soul, who does not feel dissatisfied, who does not long with all his heart and might for something which he calls heaven, where the sinfulness that now torments him, and the sorrows that now crush him, shall be lost in an atmosphere of perfect holiness and cloudless bliss. I admit that God has implanted this longing in every one of us. But I believe He has filled us with hopes that He can never satisfy. This future world that you talk about is all a dream. This world, it is true, is out of joint in many

places. There are square men in round holes, and round men in square holes. One man has too much wealth to use, another has not enough rags to warm his body, or food to put into the mouths of his hungry children. Sunshine and shadow, gladness and grief, are distributed hap-hazard to men. It is a curious, blind, confused medley of a world. But we must make the best of it. It is no use our cherishing vain hopes. Our noble aspirations will never be realised. Higher life, perfect holiness, unalloyed happiness are fine names for things that do not and never will exist."

Stop, my friend. I think I can show you that you are mistaken. Let me read my text again. "Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness (for they shall be disappointed? No), *for they shall be filled.*" You believe one part of the verse, why not believe the other? You acknowledge that the truth taught in God's word, that He has filled men with desires for a higher life, is a truth corroborated by your own experience, and by the experience of all with whom you have come in contact. You have proved God's word to be true in one case, why not believe it in the other? I like an honest doubter. He is often one who is seeking hard after truth, but in the wrong way. Let us fold such an one, my friends, in the warm embraces of our Christian charity, and teach him by our love to him the love there is in Christ Jesus, once his heart is right, his head will speedily follow. Christ only reveals Himself to His disciples. If we have doubts, the way we must come to Him is, "Lord I believe, help Thou mine unbelief." Faith first; help, light, enlightenment afterwards.

The Bible gives no uncertain promise of reward to

those who earnestly strive for the love and liberty and purity stored up in Jesus Christ.

The Old Testament is full of gracious words for yearning souls, "As the hart panteth after the water-brook, so panteth my soul for thee, O God." So says David. Hear the answer, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." When I awake! Ah, we must all go to sleep, David, first. But, when we awake! God grant us David's awakening.

We must quote Isaiah, too. In the 64th ch., and 4th verse, he says, "For since the beginning of the world, men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him." And in the 13th and 14th verses of the next chapter, he says, "Therefore, saith the Lord God, Behold my servants shall drink, behold my servants shall rejoice, behold my servants shall sing for joy of heart." Such were the glorious anticipations of the men who lived in the twilight of ante-Christian times. How much more clearly do Christ Himself, and the writers of the New Testament speak of these hopes for which the incarnate Son of God was both the pledge and the fulfilment in one and the same person.

He says to the Samaritan woman, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." And John echoes his Master's word when he writes, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." There is also that glorious passage in John vi. 35, where Christ tells us, "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me



shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."

We see by these passages what is offered us in answer to our longings. Not holiness in the abstract, but a living and holy Christ. Christ and righteousness are convertible terms. Christians assume this as one of the axioms of their faith. Let us however indicate briefly two senses in which Christ is the embodiment of all righteousness, and therefore complete satisfaction of all our soul-hunger and soul-thirst.

(a) Negatively. Christ was sinless. He was born a 'holy thing.' He grew up in childlike innocence in the humble home in Nazareth. But it was as yet untried innocence. Forces were at work which were to destroy for ever the calm of this unconscious purity. By God becoming man, infinite goodness had consented to ally itself in the same personality with the wickedness and villainess of hell. But the alliance was of short duration. A conflict for the supremacy began at once in the God-man. All heaven stood aghast, and the infernal depths gaped with wonder at the sight—the existence of God Himself hung in the balance. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the victory was won, and the demons of filthiness, and corruption, and death slunk shame-faced to their caverns for ever. In the majesty of a tried and matchless purity, the Son of God, and Son of Man stood forth to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation from sin to all people. This was Christ's spiritual resurrection, and is the guarantee of our resurrection from the grave of sin, just as His bodily resurrection is the prophecy of ours. In this sense, then, Christ is our righteousness.

(b) Positively. We are told that Christ "fulfilled all righteousness." He did not live the life of an ascetic, seeking a selfish perfection by the destruction of all human passions and sympathies. No, His whole being flowered out into innumerable blossoms of loving, self-sacrificing deeds for others. Joy and blessing sprang up like flowers in His path wherever He went. He was, and is, the Sun of Righteousness, raying forth a million genial, fertilizing influences on human hearts.

If we are filled with Christ, we have realised the truth of the text. Happy are we, if we can say with Paul, "It is Christ that liveth in me." We have not all the same capacity. But we can all be filled. No human soul is large enough to contain the whole of Christ. The finite cannot grasp the infinite within its tiny hand. But we may all make good the poet's dream, and

"Be filled of God-head as a cup  
Filled with a precious essence,"

each one according to his measure, and thus help to sweeten the world with the fragrance we have borrowed from the source of all sweetness, and light, and beauty.

E. T. DAVIES, M.A. (Cantab.)

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.—"In this sermon our Lord is laying broad and deep the foundations of His spiritual edifice. A pure and loving heart, an open and trustful conscience, a freedom of communion with the Father of spirits, a love of man as man, the measure of which is to be nothing less than a man's love of himself; above all, a stern determination at any cost to be true, such the moral material of the first stage of our Lord's public teaching."—*Canon Liddon*.

# The Preacher's Homiletical Commentary.

## HOMILETIC SKETCHES ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

OUR PURPOSE.—Many learned and devout men have gone *Philologically* through this *TEHELIM*, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough HOMILETIC treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

OUR METHOD.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1) THE HISTORY of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2) ANNOTATIONS or allusion that may occur.—(3) The ARGUMENT of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4) The HOMILETICS of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts and indicate such sermonizing methods as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

No. CLXII.

### The Religion of Gratitude.

“I LOVE THE LORD, BECAUSE HE HATH HEARD,” &c.—*Ps.* cxvi. 1-19.

HISTORY:—Whoever was the author of this Psalm it was one who had escaped from death—one who had been in great suffering, almost in mortal agonies, and yet been delivered. Was it Hezekiah? Some say so. It might be so. There are resemblances in it to Isaiah xxxvii.-xxxviii. Some portion of it is used in

the service of the Church of England for the “Churching of Women.”

ANNOTATIONS:—Ver. 1, 2. “*I love the Lord because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.*” Better perhaps, *these have loved*

the Lord. It was the love of gratitude that he felt. It was because the Lord attended to his supplications, and delivered him that he loved. The name "*Lord*," or *Jehovah*, occurs no less than fourteen times in this Psalm.

Ver. 3.—"*The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me : I found trouble and sorrow.*"

"The cords of death encircled me, and the straits of Hades caught me, distress and sorrow did I experience." His afflictions bound him like a cord, and "*the pains of hell*," the straits of Sheol or the grave pressed upon him. He was at the brink of the grave.

Ver. 4.—"*Then called I upon the name of the Lord, O Lord, I beseech thee deliver my soul.*"

Prayer in distress is an instinct of the soul, and a law of the spiritual constitution.

Ver. 5.—"*Gracious is the Lord, and righteous ; yea, our God is merciful.*" This is the testimony of his experience.

Ver. 6.—"*The Lord preserveth the simple. I was brought low, and he helped me.*" The word "*simple*" here does not mean foolish, but rather guileless.

Ver. 7.—"*Return unto thy rest, O my soul ; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.*"

The word "*rest*" is plural, and may express completeness, that completeness of rest that is found only in God. "*Return*:" addressed to his own soul, which had left its centre. "*The Lord hath dealt bountifully*," or well. God's bountihood is an argument for the soul's return to the true rest.

Ver. 8.—"*For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.*" Deliverance from "*death*," from "*tears*," and from "*falling*."

Ver. 9.—"*I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.*" Being thus delivered he resolves to pursue a true life on earth. "*I will walk*"—voluntary action ; "*before the Lord*," conscious ever of His presence ; "*in the land of the living*," on this gross dusty earth, not waiting for the higher scenes.

Ver. 10.—"*I believed, therefore have I spoken ; I was greatly afflicted.*" His confession of God's goodness here given was the expression of his irrepressible sentiment of gratitude, as if he had said, because I feel I speak.

Ver. 11.—“*I said in my haste, All men are liars.*” Under the heavy pressure of unkindness, selfishness, fraud, injustice, persecution, from my fellow men I spoke rashly, and said, “*All men are liars.*”

Ver. 12-14.—“*What shall I render unto the Lord, for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and will call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people.*”

“*The cup of salvation.*” Lit.

“*The cup of deliverances.*”

Below (ver. 18), a thank-offering is plainly mentioned, and a vow to be performed openly. Hence some think that a feast followed such thank-offering, and that a cup, here called a cup of “*deliverances*,” was passed round to the guests after such feast, to which allusion is made here. On the great feast of the Passover, after the feast, a cup of thanksgiving was passed round (Matt. xxvi. 27), but no Old Testament Scripture refers plainly to any such general custom as that supposed. Hence, others consider the word used figuratively (as in xi. 6; xvi. 5; xxiii. 5), and the meaning to be, “I will

receive and enjoy the ‘lot of salvation,’ or the prosperous, joyous lot which God has given.”—*Canon Cook.*

Ver. 15.—“*Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.*” “*His saints.*”

His gracious ones, so precious is their death that it is turned into a blessing. It is said that Babylas, Bishop of Antioch, A.D. 251, died with these words on his lips.

Ver. 16.—“*O Lord, truly I am thy servant. I am thy servant and the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds.*” “*Truly.*” Ah, now, this is the beseeching appeal. “*Thy servant,*” devoted to Thy will, in return for all Thy benefits. This is the self-dedication implied in paying his vows. It is repeated for emphasis. “*Son of thy handmaid*” (Ps. lxxxvi. 16). “*Loosed my bonds,*” by which I was bound to other masters, and now my heart goes forth in the self-consecration of free will and gratitude to Thee.”—*Murphy.*

Ver. 17.—“*I will offer to thee the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord.*” “*The sacrifices of thanksgiving.*” This is the principle form of the



peace-offering (Lev. vii. 12). Its moral value is in its being the effect and expression of genuine gratitude.

Ver. 18-19.—“*I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people. In the courts of the Lord's house. In the midst of Thee, O Jerusalem.*” Hezekiah

gives expression to this sentiment in Isaiah xxxviii. 19, 20.

ARGUMENT:—The Psalm contains two parts; the first an acknowledgment of God's goodness in the first eight verses, and the second, resolutions extending through the other eleven verses.

HOMILETICS:—The grand subject of this Psalm we take to be the *religion of gratitude*. There are three kinds, or rather degrees, of religious love—*gratitude, adoration and self consecration*. The first is the lowest, and is excited by the relative kindness of God, kindness shown not to the universe in general, but to the individual himself. The second, namely, the love of adoration is higher, it is the love of God for what He is in Himself, His essential love and kindness. The third is the highest of all, self consecration. This is a love which impels the soul to surrender itself and all to its object, By its impulse the soul becomes self-abnegated, self-lost—“lost in wonder, love, and praise.” “*I love the Lord because He hath heard my voice, and my supplication.*” It is the first degree of religious love, namely, *gratitude*, that is exhibited in this Psalm, and we trace its workings in several forms. We trace this religious gratitude—

I. IN A PROFOUND IMPRESSION of God's relative kindness. His relative kindness is shown in two ways. First: In delivering from distress. The distress seemed to have consisted (1) In bodily suffering. “*The sorrows of death compassed me and the pains of hell gat hold upon me.*” Further on he says: “*Thou hast delivered my soul from*

*death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling."*

What are the sorrows of death and the pains of hell and the grave which gat hold of this man? Who knows but those who have passed through them? The distress consisted (2) In mental sorrow. "*I found trouble and sorrow.*" Mental sorrow is worse than bodily suffering. "A wounded spirit who can bear?" His kindness is seen: Secondly: In delivering from great distress in answer to prayer. "*He hath heard the voice of my supplication. He hath inclined His ear unto me.*" Prayer is an instinct of the soul, and great suffering and great sorrow seldom fail to rouse this instinct into action, and when it is rightly inspired and directed the Great God attends to it. He attended to the prayer of this suffering man now, and removed his distress. Hence the gratitude. We trace this religious gratitude—

II.—In an EARNEST CONFESSION of God's relative kindness. First: Here is a confession of His *general* kindness. "*Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful.*" He is not only gracious and merciful, but righteous in all. The fact is, grace and mercy are holy and blessed qualities because their author is righteous. The compassion of a man destitute of moral rectitude is but a floating, transient, worthless emotion. Secondly: Here is a confession of His *personal* kindness. "*I was brought low and he helped me.*" He "*delivered my soul,*" &c. The gratitude for all this relative kindness seemed to become so irrepressible in the mind of the Psalmist that he exclaimed, "*I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.*" As if he had said, what I say in relation to God's great mercy to me I feel bound from the deepest consciousness to say, my

testimony is the testimony of conviction. We trace this religious gratitude—

III.—In a DETERMINATION TO LIVE A BETTER LIFE IN CONSEQUENCE of God's relative kindness. Here is a determination, First: To rest in God. "*Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.*" (1) The soul wants rest. Like Noah's dove it has forsaken its home, and is fluttering in the storms of external circumstances. (2) Its only rest is God. It is so constituted that it can only rest where it can find unbounded faith for its intellect, and supreme love for its heart. And who but God, the supremely good and supremely true, can supply these conditions? In Him, and in Him only, the soul can centre all its affections, and repose its unbounded confidence. (3) To this rest it must return by its own effort. "*Return unto thy rest, O my soul.*" The soul cannot be carried to this rest. It cannot be borne there by any power. As you steer the sea-tossed bark into harbour, so it must go itself into the spheres of serenity and peace. (4) A sense of God's relative kindness tends to stimulate this effort. "*The Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.*" "The goodness of God shall lead to repentance." Here is a determination, Secondly: To walk before God. "*I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.*" "I will set the Lord always before me." Whoever else I may lose sight of, ignore, or forget, His presence shall always be before my eye. We trace this religious gratitude—

IV.—In a PUBLIC ACKNOWLEDGMENT of God's relative kindness. "*What shall I render unto the Lord, for all his benefits toward me?*" "*The cup of salvation,*" a symbol of thanksgiving. When the Hebrews took

the cup of wine at the Passover, they symbolically expressed by that act their thankfulness to heaven for their deliverance from Egypt. He would perform this act: (1) With prayer. "*I will call upon the name of the Lord.*" (2) With sacrifice. "*I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving.*" "The sacrifices of God are a broken heart and contrite spirit." (3) With vows. "*I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all His people.*" I will make solemn vows, I will perform the vows I have already made, to live a higher and a truer life, and all this I will do publicly. I will do it in the presence of all the Lord's people. "*In the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem.*"

CONCLUSION:—Thus far the religion of gratitude goes. It does not take the soul into the transports of adoration, into the self-abnegation of universal love. It does not absorb the *ego* in the glories of the divine. Albeit it conducts to a stage of safety, lofty purposes, and high hopes.

"How happy all thy servants are!  
 How great thy grace to me!  
 My life, which thou hast made thy care,  
 Lord, I devote to Thee.

Now I am Thine, for ever Thine,  
 Nor shall my purpose move;  
 Thy hand hath loosed my bonds of pain,  
 And bound me with thy love.

Here in thy courts I leave my vow,  
 And thy rich grace record;  
 Witness, ye saints, who hear me vow,  
 If I forsake the Lord."

## HOMILETIC GLANCES AT THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN.

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[As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form of Sermonic Outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are:—"Introduction to New Testament," by Bleek; "Commentary on John," by Tholuck; "Commentary on John," by Hengstenberg; "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," by Westcott; "The Gospel History," by Ebrard; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon; "St. John's Gospel," by Oosterzee; "Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Dörner, Lange, Sears, Farrer, etc., etc.]

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No. CCXVII.

### The Divine Suppliant.

(Continued from page 169).

"I PRAY FOR THEM," &c. *John* xvii. 9-19.

ANOTHER thing implied here is—

VII.—That it is POSSIBLE SO TO LIVE IN THIS WORLD AS NOT TO BELONG TO IT. "*They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.*" In the current language of life there is a difference between a "man of the world," and a "worldly man." By a man of the world is generally meant not a man of sordid avarice, but of certain habitudes of life—a man who has made use of the world to enrich his experience, deepen his insight of life, polish his manners: he stands opposed to the clown, the pedant, the recluse, the sectary. He is supposed to be a man free from crotchets, angularities—a man of breed, soul, and genial humour. By "the worldly man," on the other hand, is meant one who lives *for* the world, and *to* the world, and in the selfish spirit of the world. The wealth he covets, the honours he aspires to, the pleasures he seeks, the society he cultivates, are all worldly. He is of the world, he loves



it. Christ did not belong to the world in either of these senses, neither do His disciples. The world in which a man really lives is the realm of his governing purpose. Whatever is a man's chief aim, that is his life. To it all his sympathies tend, in it all his activities operate, to it he renders all his circumstances subservient. Now the main purpose of Christ and His disciples is to do the will of their Father in heaven. But the purpose in which worldly men live is their own self-gratification. Hence it is that though the disciples of Christ are in the world, they are not of the world. The world is *practically* atheistic; it has no God. Christ and His disciples are *intensely* theistic. The world is practically materialistic, it judges after the flesh, it "walketh after the flesh." Christ and His disciples are intensely spiritual. Another truth implied here is—

VIII.—That for a good man to be KEPT IN THE WORLD IS NOT SO DESIRABLE AS THAT HE SHOULD BE KEPT FROM ITS EVIL. Observe, First :—That it is *not always* desirable for a good man to *leave the world*. (1) Not desirable on *his own* account. Until good men reach maturity of character they require this world. This world is furnished with all the appliances for spiritual training. Serious evils have, we conceive, arisen from what has long been, and still is, a popular notion in the Christian world, namely, that there is a necessary opposition in this world to true religion. The existence of monasteries is based upon this absurd opinion: and the current excuses which even the majority of Christian men urge for their not being more spiritual and devoted, are grounded upon the same foolish and miserable notion. Indeed, from the pulpit this dogma is frequently proclaimed. The truth is, the necessary claims

of the business and the avocations of this life, instead of being opposed to spiritual culture, are amongst the most important means of grace and facilities for spiritual training. (2) Not desirable on account of *others*. The truly good are social benefactors. For them to "remain in the flesh is needful." They are the correctors of the evil, and the conservators of the good. They are the lights of the world; they break through the clouds of the world's errors, sensuality and vice, and bring to bear on it the radiance of eternal truth. They are the "salt of the earth;" they penetrate with their influence the mass, and prevent it from sinking into entire corruption. When good men leave the world, the world loses their prayers, sympathies, and personal presence. The death of a good man is the quenching of a light in our sky, the drying up of a fountain on our earth. Secondly: It is *always* desirable for a good man to be kept "*from the evil*." (1) Evil is in the world. Its introduction is a mystery, but its fact is patent to all. The history of the world is little less than a history of evil. It is a serpent enfolding all things in its deadly coil; it is a dark, cold mist hanging over every scene, intercepting the rays of the sun, and checking the growth of nature; it is a miasma impregnating the atmosphere, and causing disease and death in every breath. Into this evil all men are liable to fall. This is clearly implied in the prayer. Evil here is the ascendant principle. It is everywhere; it presses all into its service—the loftiest genius and the greatest talent; it adorns itself in all the attractions that art can furnish, it speaks in the strains of music, and appears in all the fascinating forms of beauty, it promises sensual gratification, social power, and secular

wealth to its votaries. The prizes of the world are in its hand. In addition to this, there is ever in the bosoms, even of the best men, a susceptibility of being influenced by it. There are combustible elements which the fires of evil can kindle, latent germs slumbering within which outward evil can quicken into life and power. "The law in the members" is a lever in the human system always within its reach. It is, moreover, implied that (2) Good men are liable to fall into evil. (3) The falling of good men into evil is immensely injurious. To yield to one temptation, to swerve from one principle, to give up one element of truth, is a most serious thing. It is to break down the moral fences of the soul, and lay it open to every enemy. One sin may destroy peace of mind, self-respect, and, as in the case of David, send us mourning all our days. It injures our power of usefulness. One sin greatly incapacitates for good. It weakens the aim, takes emphasis from the voice, and influence from the life. And in addition to all this, it unfits for heaven. "Without holiness no man can see the Lord." (4) That the power of God is necessary to prevent this falling into evil. Christ invokes the Almighty to keep them from it. Who else can? What arm but His can hold us above the surging wave? What wisdom but His can guide us safely through? Another truth implied here is—

IX.—That between the COMMISSION OF CHRIST AND THAT OF GENUINE EVANGELIC MINISTERS THERE IS A CORRESPONDENCE. "*As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.*" First: They correspond in their authority. Both are of Divine authority. God sent Christ into the world, and Christ

sends the Church. Christians have a *right* to go into every part of the world, to unfurl their banner on every shore, and fight the battles of the Lord. We want no license from bishops or potentates to authorise us to preach the gospel. Secondly: They correspond in their *principle*. What induced Christ to come into the world, and inspired Him in working out His mission? *Love*: all-embracing, disinterested, unconquerable love. The same feeling must influence the Church, and no other feeling. Thirdly: They correspond in their *object*. Why did He come? "To seek and to save the lost." "This is a faithful saying," &c. This is our work. We have to save from ignorance, sin, the devil. Fourthly: They correspond in their *mode*. (1) Both are spontaneous. (2) Both are self-denying. (3) Both are persevering. (4) Both are diligent. (5) Both are devout. Fifthly: They correspond in their *encouragements*. (a) Christ had the divine presence, so has the Church. (b) Christ had the highest sympathy, so has the Church. (c) Christ had the assurance of success, so has the Church. Another truth implied here is—

X.—That the HOLINESS OF MAN INVOLVES THE AGENCY OF DIVINE TRUTH, AND THE CONSECRATION OF CHRIST. "*Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy word is truth. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.*" The word "*sanctify*" means to render holy, and to render holy by an inward consecration to God, and this consecration is effected, First: By *God's truth*. "*Thy truth.*" What truth? All truth is God's. All truth in physical and mental science is God's truth. But the truth here must be regarded as the "truth as it was in Jesus," as it appeared in the incarnate *Logos*, His redemptive

truth—the gospel. The gospel is the truth, its doctrines are in accord with the eternal realities ; its morality in accord with the immutable principles of rectitude ; its provisions in accord with the spiritual exigencies of fallen human nature. Secondly : By God's truth in *connection with the consecration of Christ*. “ *For their sakes I sanctify myself,*” &c. The consecration of His entire life to the spiritual interests of humanity is the soul and essence of redeeming truth. Here, then, is the power to make men holy, to put men in possession of that moral excellence which is the glory of God, the glory of Christ, and the glory of all moral beings.

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RANTING. — “The man who is really in earnest, who has real faith in what he is saying and doing, will not be noisy and loud, and in a hurry, as it is written, ‘He that believeth will not make haste.’ He that is really strong, he who knows that he can do his work, if he takes his time and uses his wit, and God prospers him—he will not be violent, but will work on in silence and peaceful industry, as it is written, ‘Their strength is to sit still.’ But if you go into great towns you will hear much noisy and violent speaking from pulpits, and at public meetings. You will read much noisy and violent writing in newspapers and books. Now, I say to you, distrust such talk. It may seem to you very earnest and passionate. Distrust it for that very reason. It may seem to you very eloquent and full of fine words. Distrust it for that very reason. The man who cannot tell his history without wrapping it up in fine words, generally does not know very clearly what he is talking about. The man who cannot speak or write without scolding or exaggeration, is not very likely to be able to give sound advice to his fellow men.”—*Charles Kingsley*.

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## Sermonic Saplings.

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A SONG OF DEGREES (7) A POLITICAL FACT  
THAT IS EMBLEMATIC, AND A HUMAN  
EXPERIENCE THAT IS COMMON.

“WHEN THE LORD TURNED AGAIN THE CAPTIVITY OF  
ZION, WE WERE LIKE THEM THAT DREAM,” &c. *Ps.* cxxxvi. 1-6.



OME say that Ezra was the author of this Psalm. It must have been written by him, or someone who lived in his circumstances and time. The Jews had just returned from Babylon, and were engaged in the rebuilding of the Temple on its occasion. In the Psalm there are two things worthy of our attention:—

I. A POLITICAL FACT, EMBLEMATIC OF MORAL RESTORATION. The political fact here celebrated is the return of the Jews from Babylonian thralldom, through the interposition of Cyrus. Observe, First: That the political restoration was *great*. It was a restoration from *exile*; for seventy long years they had lived in banishment from their fatherland. To leave one's native country for any lengthened period, even voluntarily and with promising prospects, often breaks the heart; but to be forced away from it by the ruthless armies of a foreign despot involves an anguish that is inexpressible. It was a restoration from *bondage*. In Babylon they were abject slaves, divested of their individual liberties, and mere instruments in the hand of despots. It was a restoration from the *destitution of religious privileges*. In Babylon they were away from the sight of the Temple, with all its sacred ordinances

and hallowed associations. Such was their condition in Babylon, we wonder not to hear them exclaim, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" May not this be regarded as a striking emblem of that grand moral restoration revealed in and effected by the Gospel? Are not souls in their unregenerate state exiles alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, slaves "carnally sold under sin," destitute of true religion, without God and without hope in the world? Observe, Secondly: That the political restoration was *divine*. "*The Lord hath done great things for us whereof we are glad.*" Though Cyrus, with his victorious armies, was the instrument of the deliverance, Jehovah was the *Agent*. Thus saith Cyrus, King of Persia, "The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and He hath charged me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Even the heathen saw God in the event and they said, '*the Lord hath done great things.*'" Who else can effect the salvation of the soul? "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord." Another thing worthy of attention in this Psalm is—

II. A HUMAN EXPERIENCE COMMON TO MOST MEN. In the human experience here revealed we see things that are pretty general in the consciousness of men. First: *A great difficulty to realise at once a great and unexpected event.* "*When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream.*" The event was so great, so unexpected, and withal fraught with so much blessing, that when they were told of it, they could not realise it, they thought they were dreaming. Men are often in this state, whether the unexpected event is *pleasant* or *painful*. When a piece of

intelligence fraught with unusual benediction comes to us, it seems to come first merely as a "*dream*." When the Romans proclaimed liberty to the Greeks, who had been enslaved by Philip, King of Macedonia, the congregated thousands could not realise it. "Scarcely," says the historian, "could any person believe what he heard, they gazed at each other with wonder, as if it were some illusion." When the resurrection of Christ was announced to the disciples, it seemed to them at first as a tale, they could not realise it. So when Peter was delivered from Herod's dungeon, and the chains dropped from his limbs, and the angel threw open the doors and bade him come to the open air, it is said "he went and followed him, and wist not that it was true what was done by the angel but thought he saw a vision." It is so also with the intelligence of painful events. The death of a father or mother, a husband or wife, a brother or sister, how long before we can realise it! For days—aye, and for months—it seems a "*dream*." There is mercy in this. Could we fully realise great and unexpected events as they occur, our nervous systems would be shattered, our mental powers would be paralysed. Thank God for this dreaming faculty, a faculty which weakens the force of terrible events. We see here, Secondly: *The irrepressibility of strong emotions.* "*Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing.*" As the meaning dawned brighter and brighter on their consciousness, their emotion became too tumultuous for silence, and they shouted. There are emotions to which souls are susceptible that cannot always be suppressed; they are electric, and must break in thunder and flash in lightning. These emotions are useful, they clarify the atmosphere and

bring in the sunny and serenè. We see here, Thirdly : *The inspiring force of success.* The heathen saith in relation to this event : “ *The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.*” But what did they say before ? Virtually that God ignored them, despised them ; they had asked, perhaps, how could these people be the favourites of heaven when they were trampled under foot by the worshippers of other gods ? But now that the tide had turned in their favour, as they were brought back to their own land with the vigorous inspirations of liberty, hope, religion and patriotism, they rose higher in the estimation of these heathen nations. “ *The Lord hath done great things.*” Success has a wonderful power over some minds. To them the successful thing is the divine thing, success is their god. A more dastardly spirit, know I not, than that which worships success, and yet how prevalent. We see here Fourthly : *Love for others increasing with increased blessings.* “ *Turn again our captivity, O Lord, as the streams in the south.*” All the captives did not return at once to their own land, for some reason or other thousands remained, and here is a prayer for them by their brethren who were tasting the blessing of freedom. “ *Turn back our captivity, O Lord,*” or rather bring back our remaining captives, “ *as the streams in the south.*” “As the streams in the dry land are restored in the rainy season, fill the beds of ancient watercourses, and renew life and movement where silence and desolation were before : so the Psalmist says, turn our captivity or restore the residue to fill our streets and cities with inhabitants, and convert a wilderness into a peopled land.” *Canon Cook.* Here is a law—*He who*

*practically appreciates the blessings he receives from heaven, will desire that others may participate in the same.* He who is good will do good, he who is truly pious will be philanthropic. We see here, Fifthly: *That true happiness comes out of suffering.* “*They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.*” (1) It comes out of the sufferings of *others*. How much of the enjoyments of the men of this age have come out of the sorrows, agonies and tears, of the men of past generations! In truth, all the true happiness that men have ever enjoyed, or will ever enjoy, comes out of the sufferings of One who “suffered, the Just for the unjust, to bring sinners to God.” What tears He shed, what agonies He endured! (2) It comes out of the sufferings of *ourselves*. Godly repentance is the essential condition of spiritual enjoyment. There must be the tears of repentance, and the “strivings as of blood,” against the wrong. “Through much tribulation,” &c. We see here, Sixthly: *That genuine work for others, however painful, will be prosperous.* “*He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.*”

Observe: (1) Philanthropic acts are seeds. There is a germinic life in every noble act, a life capable of indefinite multiplication. (2) The sowing of these seeds is often very painful. “*Sow in tears.*” Parents, ministers, missionaries, all will attest this. (3) However painful, their harvest will reward the sower amply. They will yield “*sheaves.*” They fall into the soil of human souls, and this soil is *fecundant* and *imperishable*. With these sheaves under his arm



the sower exults in the issues of his labours. "*He shall come again with rejoicing.*" "*Come.*" Whence? Whither? \*

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## A SONG OF DEGREES (8) BLESSEDNESS IN LABOUR, IN REST, AND IN FATHERHOOD.

"EXCEPT THE LORD BUILD THE HOUSE, THEY LABOUR IN VAIN THAT BUILD IT," &c. *Ps.* cxxvii. 1-5.

ALTHOUGH the Hebrew title attributes this Psalm to Solomon, the Greek version does not credit him with the authorship. It is, I think, more probable to have been composed by some one who lived when the Jews after they returned, were engaged in the re-building of Jerusalem and the temple. I am more disposed to believe that Zerubbabel or Nehemiah was the author, than either David or Solomon. The Psalm brings under our attention human labour, human repose, and human offspring.

I. HUMAN LABOUR. The personal labour here referred to is labour without God. "*Except the Lord build the house they labour in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city the watchman waketh but in vain.*" This implies two things. (1) The possibility of working without God. Man working without God. How could this be? What does it mean? (a) It does not mean that he works without God's *permission*. Without His per-

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\* See "Homilist," Vol. v., page 404.

mission the highest angel can do nothing, cannot think a thought, or move a faculty. ( $\beta$ ) It does not mean without God's *support*. All creatures live and move in Him. He sustains the evil and the good. The devil himself lives by His power. ( $\gamma$ ) It does not mean that he works without His *control*. He superintends and overrules all action. He "maketh the wrath of man to praise Him." Hell itself is under His authority. What, then, does it mean? *Labour without His inspiration*. All the labour of all moral intelligences ought to be inspired by a supreme regard to Himself. His love should be the impulse, His will the law, His glory the end of all the activities of His intelligent creation. "Whatsoever we do in word or deed," &c. God should be the all in all of the activities of every soul. Those who are not thus inspired may be said to work *without* God. They are practically atheists, they are without God in the world. (2) The *fruitlessness* of working without God. "*Except the Lord build the house they labour in vain that build it.*" In "*vain*" not because the house will not be built. Atheism can build mansions, castles, palaces, cities. It has done so, it is doing so. Atheism, too, can "*keep the city*" safe from the invasion of a foreign foe. Atheism can do a deal of work in every department of human activity. Still, it is "*vain.*" It is "*in vain,*" because it does not answer either of the two grand purposes of the labour. ( $\alpha$ ) It does not secure the approbation of the great Master. If there be a God, has a creature any higher end than to please Him? Failing to please Him is the failure of failures. His smile is the only heaven of creatures, His frown is hell. ( $\beta$ ) It does not yield moral satisfaction to the servant. Men who "*labour*

*without God*," may, and often do, enjoy some pleasures. These pleasures are all unsatisfactory and evanescent. Man's spiritual constitution is such that he cannot be happy in any labour that springs not from the true inspiration of God. Thus "*labour without God*" is vain. Farmers, unless the Lord cultivate the field, merchants, unless the Lord effect the transaction, authors, unless the Lord inspire the book, statesmen, unless the Lord enact the measure, preachers, unless the Lord make the sermon, that is, unless He is the inspiration of all your efforts, your "*labour is in vain*." It will neither meet His approval, nor yield you true satisfaction. The psalm brings under our notice—

II. HUMAN REPOSE. "*So he giveth his beloved sleep*." "The usual interpretation," says Prebendary Young, "with modern expositors is, thus (in like manner—the same thing which you can procure by toilsome effort) he giveth his beloved in, or by sleep, while they sleep. The restless, self-reliant man may toil early and late, but he toils in vain; while he who fears and trusts in God is blessed, even when he sleeps. If the authorised version is followed, it must be explained somewhat in this way; in vain ye toil and moil, and curtail the time of rest; so, *i.e.*, without toiling and moiling, He gives to His beloved sleep: they are not restless and anxious, but lay them down in peace, and God gives them sleep."

"Still on the favoured of his eyes;  
He bids sweet slumber freely wait."

*Keble.*

Two thoughts are here suggested: First: That repose is a *generally recognised* blessing. Hence it is here

put in opposition to the vain and restless labour of worldly men. *Bodily* repose is a generally recognised blessing. The labouring world hails the hour when its exhausted frame can lie down to sleep. Bodily sleep not only re-invigorates the physical energies of men but luries for a time in oblivion their mental cares. *Mental* repose is also a generally recognised blessing. To have the mind free from the harrassing cares and painful annoyances of life. All desire this. The words suggest: Secondly: That the repose of a true worker is a *special* blessing. Whether the "*beloved*" here refers to any particular person or class or not, it must be regarded as representing the true worker. He only who works by the inspiration of God is "*His beloved*." To such He gives sleep in a special sense. All have sleep, but none have such sleep as that He gives. The bodily repose He gives to His "*beloved*" in the stillness of the night has a special value—the pillow so soft, and the bed so guarded. The *mental* repose He gives is also of a far higher kind. It is the repose of conscience, the repose of a soul centreing all its loves and hopes in Him. The *mortal* repose He gives "*His beloved*" is of a far more valuable kind than that which the common sleepers of the tomb inherit. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints."

"O earth, so full of dreary noises!  
 O men, with wailing in your voices!  
 O delved gold, the miser's heap!  
 O strife, O curse, that o'er it fall!  
 God makes a silence through you all,  
 And 'giveth His beloved sleep.'"

*Mrs. Browning.*

The Psalm brings under our notice—

III. HUMAN OFFSPRING. “*Lo! children are an heritage from the Lord,*” &c. Children are here spoken of as a valuable possession, a “*heritage,*” and as a “*heritage from the Lord,*” they are His gifts. They are spoken of as implements of defence. “*As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man,*” or a warrior. They are spoken of as great blessings. “*Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them.*” With an abundance of such arrows in his quiver, he is well equipped for the battle fields, and ably defended in old age. Alas! there are children who, instead of being arrows in the quiver of the father for his defence, are javelins to pierce his heart with anguish. The tutor of Alexander the Great once proposed the question, whether a large family be a good or an evil? And he answered his own question, thus, “*Everything depends on the character of the children.* If of an excellent disposition, blessed is the father that hath many of them, if of a bad disposition, the fewer the better, and still better, none!”

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## *Germes of Thought.*

### THE PREACHER'S FINGER-POST.

#### A. Conventional Judge, an Insolent Sycophant, and an Unique Prisoner.

“THE HIGH PRIEST THEN ASKED JESUS OF HIS DISCIPLES, AND OF HIS DOCTRINE. JESUS ANSWERED HIM, I SPAKE OPENLY TO THE WORLD; I EVER TAUGHT IN THE SYNAGOGUE, AND IN THE TEMPLE, WHITHER THE JEWS ALWAYS RESORT; AND IN SECRET HAVE I SAID NOTHING. WHY ASKEST THOU ME? ASK THEM WHICH HEARD ME, WHAT I HAVE SAID UNTO THEM: BEHOLD, THEY KNOW WHAT I SAID. AND WHEN HE HAD THUS SPOKEN, ONE OF THE OFFICERS WHICH STOOD BY STRUCK JESUS WITH THE PALM OF HIS HAND, SAYING, ANSWEREST THOU THE HIGH PRIEST SO? JESUS ANSWERED HIM, IF I HAVE SPOKEN EVIL, BEAR WITNESS OF THE EVIL: BUT IF WELL, WHY SMITEST THOU ME?”—*John xviii. 19-23.*

It would seem that Jesus remained bound in the palace of Annas (who had occupied several times the position of high priest), and waiting for Caiaphas, the high priest that year, to convene a meeting of the Sanhedrim. During this period of waiting the circumstances narrated in the verses before us occurred, and they present

to us three subjects of thought: a *conventional judge*, an *insolent sycophant*, and an *unique prisoner*.

I. A CONVENTIONAL JUDGE. Whether Annas had any right to exercise judicial authority at this time, or assumed it because he had long exercised it, and was of great experience, and of exten-

sive influence, he now assumes that authority, and subjects Christ to interrogations. I discover three very censurable elements in the conduct of this conventional judge on this occasion. Here is, First: *Officiousness*. If he had been in possession of judical authority at this time he had no right whatever to ask the prisoner concerning "*His disciples, and of His doctrine.*" His business was with His personal conduct. Was He personally guilty, or not, of any sin against ecclesiastic or civic laws? But, inasmuch as in all probability he was not in possession of any judical authority, his officiousness was indecent and offensive. Another censurable element discoverable in this conventional judge is, Secondly: — *Craftiness*. The question was evidently designed to entrap Christ into some state-

ments that might be used against Him at His trial, some statements that might involve Christ in something like a self-crimination. Craftiness is one of the most despicable attributes of character, and scarcely anywhere is it so prominent and prevalent as in courts of law, and on the judical bench; in sooth it is regarded too much as a qualification for judical work. Another censurable element discovered in this conventional judge is, Thirdly: — *Heartlessness*. It might have been supposed that an old man who had been brought up from childhood in the religion of the patriarchs, and who, long before Christ was born, occupied the highest position, in order to vindicate its rights and extend its influence, would have been touched into the tenderest compassion at seeing a young

Man Whose countenance had no trace of vice, but radiated with virtue, bound with chains, and awaiting a terrible doom. But no, his whole heart is callous. The atmosphere of the high office which he had sustained for many a long year had frozen within him all the fountains of humanity. In a conventional judge, sad to say, there is nothing very rare in this. How often do we find an old man on the bench, who seems to gloat over every new contribution of evidence that goes to convict the prisoner, and with the black cap on his head will pronounce sentence of death with heart unthrilled, and a voice unquivering. It is said that justice is cold. This is a libel on the celestial attribute. Justice is a ray of love, it is indeed a modification of love, it is rooted in love, and cannot live without

the root ; quench love in the soul, and what is called justice becomes statutory rigorousness.

“The calm divinity of justice  
sits

And pities while she punishes  
mankind.” *Thompson.*

The words present to us—

II. AN INSOLENT SYCOPHANT. “*One of the officers which stood by, struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest Thou the High Priest so ?*” First: Here is an act of *sycophancy*. This man was one of those mean craven souls, who are ever ready to flatter superiors. He wished Annas to think that he saw in the reply of Christ the want of that respect which such a high dignitary should always have, and the miserable lacquey considered that he would be pleased by a prompt recognition and avengement of the same. No

doubt this was the spirit that actuated this man. A more despicable and pernicious character than this, know I not: despicable because it implies the lack of all manly independence; pernicious, for it degrades the possessor, deceives others, and impedes the progress of individuals and communities. But whilst it is despicable and pernicious, it is, alas, prevalent not only in courts, but in all circles society through; parasites abound, the Calibans count their millions.

“Deceitful, smiling, fawning  
flatterers,

Like rats oft bite the holy cords  
in twain,

Too intricate to unloose: soothe  
every passion

That in the nature of their  
Lord's rebels :

Revenge, affirm, and turn their  
halcyon beaks

With every gale and vary of  
their masters.”

*Shakespeare.*

Secondly: Here is the  
act of *insolence*. He

“*Struck Jesus with the palm of his hand,*” or, more correctly, with his hand. Mark the heartless insolence of this creature: he struck an innocent man who stood before him bound as a prisoner; more than that, he struck the incarnate God. The lowest natured persons are always the most insolent, men who are the most ready to flatter those above them, are ever most disposed to treat with the most rudeness those of a humbler grade. The reason is obvious, the sycophant can have no true respect for himself, for being an abject toady he finds nothing in himself to respect, and much with which to feel self-disgust: and he who respects not himself has neither the desire or the qualification to respect others. At the bidding of those in power, the servile multitudes will deal out

insults, not only to every passer by, but even to those in the higher ranks of intelligence and morality.

The words present to us—

III. AN UNIQUE PRISONER. First: Mark His reply to the conventional judge. "*Jesus answered him, I spake, (or 'I have spoken') openly to the world, I ever taught in the synagogue (or 'synagogues'), and in the temple whither the Jews always resort (or where all the Jews come together), and in secret have I said (or 'spake I') nothing. Why askest thou Me? Ask them which heard Me (or 'that have heard Me') what I have said (or 'spake') unto them, behold they know what I said (or 'these know the things which I said').*" In this reply three things are observable. (1) *Manly independency.* There is no bowing down before this venerable official, nothing crouching or craven, He

speaks to him as man to man. It is noteworthy that Christ pays no respect to mere office. In these last days men have come to think that an elevated office of itself has a just claim to respect and honour, a huge fallacy this. Legislative, administrative, regal offices, what are they worth if not occupied by morally worthy men? Nothing, they are simply contemptible. The more elevated the office is, the more dishonourable the man who occupies it, if not intellectually and morally qualified. Ignorance and depravity are bad everywhere; bad in the poor and the obscure, but a thousand times more abhorrent in the legislator, the judge, and king. Mere office is an abstraction, it is the man who makes the office worthy or unworthy. Christ had no respect for this man as a man, and therefore no respect for



him as a judge. In this reply we see, (2) *Conscious honesty*. Christ's referring the question to His disciples, indicates that He had nothing to fear. "*Why askest thou Me? ask them which heard Me, what I have said.*" I have taught no secret doctrine, I have formed no secret society, I am no conspirator, what I have said and done has been in the face of all the world, in the synagogues of the Jew and in the Temple at Jerusalem, in the face of open day have I said what I had to say. Does not this indicate conscious honesty? It was this that made him fearless and invincible. In this reply we see, (3) *Faith in humanity*. No one had such an overwhelming and painful sense of the moral depravity of the men of his age as Christ had, yet He was prepared to trust to their verdict. He

seemed to feel that it would be impossible for them if they had any remnant of conscience left to accuse Him of anything underhanded or conspiratory. Confidence in human nature is the effect and evidence of conscious honesty. Treat every man as a rogue until you find him honest is the maxim of the world. Christ acted on the converse, He treated every man as honest until He found him otherwise. The greatest rogues are ever the most suspicious. Secondly: Mark His reply to the insolent sycophant. "*Jesus answered him, if I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil, but if well, why smitest thou Me?*" Though a miserable retainer, the base minion of bloated authority, albeit Christ treats him as a man, and says virtually, "If I have said anything improper, stand forth as a witness against me, but

if not, why employ brute force towards Me?" If this man had a soul this rebuke must have shook its every fibre. An unique prisoner this! In truth, He was only a prisoner in form and aspect. The conventional judge and

his insolent sycophant they were, in truth, the prisoners, their little souls were manacled by chains stronger than adamant. He was the true Judge, the sublime Judge of all mankind.

### The Two Denials of Peter.

"NOW ANNAS HAD SENT HIM BOUND UNTO CAIAPHAS THE HIGH PRIEST. AND SIMON PETER STOOD AND WARMED HIMSELF. THEY SAID THEREFORE UNTO HIM, ART NOT THOU ALSO ONE OF HIS DISCIPLES? HE DENIED IT, AND SAID, I AM NOT. ONE OF THE SERVANTS OF THE HIGH PRIEST, BEING HIS KINSMAN WHOSE EAR PETER CUT OFF, SAITH, DID NOT I SEE THEE IN THE GARDEN WITH HIM? PETER THEN DENIED AGAIN: AND IMMEDIATELY THE COCK CREW."—*John* xviii. 24-27.

On the termination of Christ's pre-examination by Annas, he sent Him bound in chains into the hall of Caiaphas, which was contiguous, and probably under the same roof. "Our evangelist, it would seem, had nothing to add to the ample details of the trial and condemnation of the Lord Jesus and the indignities with which He was thereafter treated, and next to nothing on the sad

fall of Peter in the midst of these transactions. With all this he holds his readers already familiar through the records of the three preceding evangelists. In the 24th verse, accordingly, he simply tells us that, "Annas sent Him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest," without so much as mentioning what this was for, still less giving any particulars of the trial.

And though he relates in the briefest terms two of Peter's denials, and the crowing of the cock, this is merely to supply one small but striking particular, which had not been noticed in the preceding gospels, how one of those who charged Peter with being a disciple of Jesus was able to identify him, by his own relationship to the man whose ear Peter had cut off in the garden and who saw him do it."—*Dr. Brown.*

The fact that the other synoptists record the three denials of Peter at the house of Caiaphas and John, only two here can be explained by the fact that Annas and Caiaphas in all probability occupied the same sacerdotal palace, and that the passage from the presence of the one into that of the other would occupy scarcely any time, and the three denials therefore

would be regarded as successive.\*

There are four things here in connection with Peter's conduct now in the hall of Caiaphas, on which we may profitably fasten our attention.

I. HE HAD STEPPED INTO A TEMPTING SOCIETY. First: In that hall he would meet with a rank of men *superior to his own grade.* In that hall no doubt there were some of the magnates of Jerusalem, some perhaps even members of the Sanhedrim, and others their acquaintances and friends. Peter was a poor fisherman, his pedigree was obscure, and his circumstances were impoverished. One poor man in the presence of magnates could scarcely fail to feel that influence, would, whilst listening to

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\* For a fuller representation of Peter's denial, as recorded by the evangelists, see my "Genius of the Gospel," page 672.

their words and marking their stately manners, involuntarily cower in their presence. The poor are ever disposed servilely to honour and imitate the rich. Secondly: The rank of men that Peter would meet in the hall *were all hostile to Christ*. He would hear not only their disparaging remarks concerning Him, but their language of ridicule, scorn, and contempt. Arguments, too, conducted perhaps with logical power would fall on his ears to show from the Old Testament Scriptures that Christ was a blasphemous impostor. In such a social atmosphere as this his confidence in Christ would be shaken, grow cold and weak. Sad for thee, Peter, that thou shouldst enter such a circle. "Evil companionships corrupt good manners." "One rotten apple," says Feltham, "will infect the store,

the putrid grape corrupts the whole sound cluster. If I have found any good companions I will cherish them as the choicest of men, or as angels which are sent as guardians to me. If I have any bad ones, I will study to lose them, lest by keeping them I lose myself in the end." Another circumstance here worth noticing is—

II.—THE PERILOUSNESS OF HIS POSITION WAS BECOMING MORE IMMINENT. He might well have concluded that if his Master were to be actually crucified, that his own ruin would be terrific and inevitable; the devotees of the universally hated One would be hated, of the murdered One would be destroyed. And all this because very likely every hour, the clouds were becoming more and more widespread and black, all the stars of hope had set, the

sky was black as midnight. How could he continue in his devotion to Him in such a tremendous hour? Fear impelled him to deny, and deny he did. Fear emasculates a man, strikes down his courage, takes the heart out of him, it makes the most open nature often quiver in every fibre.

"I feel my sinews slackened  
with the fright,  
And a cold sweat trills down  
o'er all my limbs,  
As if I were dissolving into  
water."—*Dryden*.

Another circumstance here deserving remark is—

III.—HIS RECOGNITION  
BY THE BROTHER OF AN  
ENEMY. "*One of the  
servants of the High Priest,  
being his kinsman whose  
ear Peter cut off, saith,  
Did I not see thee in the  
garden with him?*" It  
was bad enough for him  
to have been recognised  
by the portress as Christ's  
disciple, bad enough that  
those who stood by while

he was warming himself  
should ask, "Art thou not  
one of his disciples?"  
but far more distressing  
was it to be recognised by  
an official, the ear of whose  
kinsman his sword had cut  
off. "*Did I not see thee  
in the garden with him?*"  
This was scarcely a ques-  
tion of curiosity, scarcely  
a question put for the  
sake of information, it  
breathes vengeance, it  
means perhaps this, Dost  
thou mean to say that I,  
whose brother thou hast  
injured, did not see thee  
in the garden with Him?  
Did I not stand by thee  
and glare at thee with in-  
dignation when thou didst  
assault my brother?  
Terrible stroke this for  
Peter! Perhaps when he  
entered this hall he con-  
gratulated himself upon  
his good fortune; it was  
warm in the cold night,  
and he stood side by side  
with great men. "Thou  
art more fortunate," says  
Gossner, "in having a



friend who preventeth thee from going in to men of the world, than in possessing one who procureth thee access to them, and introduceth thee into their dwellings." The other circumstance that is noteworthy here is—

IV. — HE WAS UNEXPECTEDLY ROUSED TO THE SENSE OF HIS SIN. "*Peter then denied again: and immediately the cock crew.*" The cock crew in the very climax of his infidelity; twice before the shriek of this bird had filled his ear, now it fell like a thunder clap on his conscience. God can give the most innocent object in nature an arrow to pierce the soul, the most feeble voice a power that shall rouse the sleeping conscience into fury. Elsewhere it is said, "Peter remembered the words of Jesus," and when he

thought thereon "he wept." And, again, it is said he "went out and wept bitterly." He went out from the companionship of ruffians, and the scene of bigotry and injustice—he went out from the circle where he had been tempted to a course of wickedness, whose memory now struck him with horror and alarm—he went out into the solitudes of nature, under the quiet vault of night, to weep his tears at the foot of justice, and to breathe his sighs into the ear of mercy. He went out to unburden himself of that load of guilt which he had contracted, and to consecrate his being once more to the will of his Maker. He wept bitterly and his tears were

"Like blessed showers  
Which leave the skies they  
come from  
Bright and holy."

## A Two-fold Appeal of Pilate to the Enemies of Christ, and their Response.

"PILATE THEN WENT OUT UNTO THEM, AND SAID, WHAT ACCUSATION BRING YE AGAINST THIS MAN? THEY ANSWERED AND SAID UNTO HIM, IF HE WERE NOT A MALEFACTOR, WE WOULD NOT HAVE DELIVERED HIM UP UNTO THEE. THEN SAID PILATE UNTO THEM, TAKE YE HIM, AND JUDGE HIM ACCORDING TO YOUR LAW. THE JEWS THEREFORE SAID UNTO HIM, IT IS NOT LAWFUL FOR US TO PUT ANY MAN TO DEATH: THAT THE SAYING OF JESUS MIGHT BE FULFILLED, WHICH HE SPAKE, SIGNIFYING WHAT DEATH HE SHOULD DIE."—*John* xviii. 29-32.

As the spurious sanctity of these scribes and Pharisees who thirsted for the blood of Christ would not permit them to enter the Prætorium, or the hall of judgment into which they had forced Christ to appear before Pilate as a prisoner, Pilate comes forth to them and asks, "*What accusation bring ye against this man?*" In this position outside of the Prætorium we have

two distinct appeals which he makes to them, and their response to each. Let us notice—

I.—Pilate's FIRST appeal to the enemies of Christ and their response. "*What accusation bring ye against this man?*" It is probable that Pilate had a general knowledge of the charge which they had to bring; but now, as he has to enter on the business of a judge, he would require something more specific. As the Roman procurator, he demands to know the specific crime Christ had committed against the Roman law. What response did these intolerant bigots make to the appeal? Here it is. It is very characteristic and very significant. "*They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor (evil-doer), we would not have delivered him*

up unto thee." Look with an analytic eye into this utterance, and we shall detect three elements of moral depravity. First: *Baseless calumny*. "*If he were not a malefactor,*" an evil-doer. Meaning that He was an evil-doer was a well-attested fact. As if they had said, that He is a great criminal is patent and notorious. But what evil had He done, what crime had He perpetrated? None whatever. Here, then, is a vile calumny implied rather than expressed. Thus slander generally works. It unblushingly assumes wrong in the character it traduces, and expresses it not in intelligible language, but in oblique inuendo, a nod of the head, a shrug of the shoulder, and an expression of the countenance. Secondly: *An arrogated superiority*. "*If he were not a malefactor, we would not have deli-*

*vered him up unto thee.*" "*We*" could not have done such a thing. As if they had said, so vital is our sympathy with rectitude, that we should have recoiled with abhorrence from charging crime on an innocent man. "*We would not have delivered him up,*" no, not for the world. There is a great social influence in arrogated superiority, whether intellectual or moral. Let a man assume before his fellows that he is a great thinker, a great scholar, and the thoughtless circles in which he lives will accept him as such, and ring out his transcendent merits. Let a man assume to be preeminently holy, and in the especial confidence of heaven, and he shall be accepted as a saint of the first rank, and the chief of all the prophets. The credulous fools in the sphere in which he moves, whether large or small,

will regard his prayers as having the power to reverse the laws of the universe, and his dogmas as having an efficacy to rescue souls from damnation. As a rule, alas, our contemporaries take us, not for what we are, but for what we assume to be. Thirdly : *Crouching sycophancy*. “*We would not have delivered him up unto thee*” — thee, the great judge. “*Their demand,*” says Lange, “*was intended to convey the right of a greater independence. If we come before thy tribunal that is an honour for thee, in return for which thou canst surely do us the honour to recognise our sentence without further ceremony.*” Corrupt men always work out their base designs by a crawling servility to men in power. The devil himself is the prince of sneaks and sycophants. Let us notice—

II.—Pilate's SECOND ap-

peal to the enemies of Christ, and their response. “*Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.*” Pilate's words here seem to be an ironical reply to their assumption. They assume that the very fact of their bringing Jesus before him was in itself a proof of His criminality. Pilate virtually says, “*Very well, then, this being so, dispose of Him if you dare, do not trouble me.*” What was their reply? “*It is not lawful for us to put any man to death : that the saying (word) of Jesus might be fulfilled which he spake, signifying by what death he should die*” (“*by what manner of death He should die*”). Two remarks here concerning these enemies of Christ. First : They were *animated by a*

*mortal malice.* Their hatred to Christ had become so hot and rampant that nothing short of His death would satisfy them. "*It is not lawful for us to put any man to death,*" and His death we want. For this we come to thee. Nothing but His death will satisfy us. To what a height had the tide of their depravity risen. Secondly: Their mortal malice was *restrained by Providence*. Two things seem to have restrained them: (1) Public law. They would have inflicted on Him capital punishment themselves, but the Romans had taken away that power. "*It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.*" "According to the Talmud, as well as John, the right of inflicting capital punishment did not now belong to the Sanhedrim. In the times which had followed the conquest, the governors had probably made use of

concessions to the conquered people. But not long before this, perhaps since the governorship of the despotic Pilate, the Jews had been reduced to the common provincial law: the *Jus gladii* had been withdrawn from them. "Forty years before the destruction of the temple," says the Talmud, "capital sentences were taken away from Israel." It was therefore about the year 30 of our era, the year of Jesus' death. Hence the reason why the rulers were obliged to lead Jesus before Pilate, and to ask this Gentile magistrate to ratify and execute the sentence which they had just pronounced." — *Godet*. They were restrained by (2) A divine decree. "*That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying by what death he should die.*" Christ had frequently predicted that He should die the death of



crucifixion (Matt. xx. 19 ; John iii. 14 ; xii. 32). But crucifixion was the Roman mode of inflicting capital punishment. Had it been left to the Jews to put Him to death, it would have been by stoning (Lev. xxi. 16 : 2 Kings vi. 17 ; Acts i. 16). There was, therefore, a divine purpose as well as a Roman law that *restrained* them from putting to

death the Son of God. Sinners live under a grand system of restraints. They are held back from fully gratifying their passions or realising their aims. It is well that it is so, otherwise the world would soon become a Pandemonium. Even the devil himself, like some fiery steed, is reined in with bit and bridle.

### God's Greatest Gift Conditioned on Man's Obedience.\*

"THE HOLY GHOST, WHOM GOD HATH GIVEN TO THEM THAT OBEY HIM." *Acts v. 32.*

I. GOD'S GREATEST GIFT. What is that? "The Holy Ghost." This gift, whatever it means, was a grand promise in the Old Testament. Joel ii. 29. It was a grand promise of Christ. "I will not leave you comfortless," the Holy Ghost was that mighty Power that pro-

duced the revival on the Day of Pentecost. This "Holy Ghost" is represented as *quicken*ing, *en*-lightening, *re*generating, *purify*ing, *guid*ing and *sus*taining the human soul. Entering the soul there comes with this Holy Ghost all that the soul requires. When men are "filled with the Holy Ghost," they are filled with the ideas of God ; with the

\* Substance of a discourse preached at Dr. Allon's Church, Islington, Sunday Evening, August 28th, 1881.

sublimest emotions and aspirations. Stephen, when filled with the Holy Ghost, "beheld the heavens opened," &c. The soul without this Holy Ghost is a withered branch, a fountainless pool, a moral corpse. So that having the Holy Ghost man has everything, has God in him.

II. GOD'S GREATEST GIFT  
CONDITIONED ON HUMAN  
OBEDIENCE. "Obey." Obedience implies ( $\alpha$ ) law, ( $\beta$ ) knowledge of law, ( $\gamma$ ) actual conformity to law. The great law is the will of God, and the will of God is most fully proclaimed in the Life of Christ. Hence to follow Him is complete obedience. This obedience is that which opens the soul to the reception of this transcendent gift. It is a door, so to speak, through which He enters, it is the floodgates through which the heavenly influence flows into the soul. We say obedience ( $\alpha$ ) In contradistinction to *mere theological knowledge*. Sound theological knowledge is not to be

disparaged, but it is not the gate through which the Holy Spirit enters. "The devils believe and tremble." "Faith without work is dead." ( $\beta$ ) In contradistinction to *prayer*. Has not Christ said, "If ye then being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Heavenly Father give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" Yes, but what is asking? What is prayer? Not the language of the lip, however scriptural and constant. But the surrender and consecration of the life. And *that* is practical obedience. There is no real prayer without obedience. ( $\gamma$ ) In contradistinction to *sentimental revivalism*. There are those who imagine that by getting themselves worked into a high state of feverish emotion the Spirit of God will come, forgetting that God is not in the storm, or fire, or whirlwind, but in the still, small voice of duty. Luther, in a familiar passage says, "Many men seem

with open mouth to be crying for 'The Spirit, The Spirit,' while they close every avenue, shut every door of the soul against the incoming of the Spirit." The great door is obedience. God has given the Holy Ghost to those that OBEY Him. We gather a lesson, First: *For the Christian worker who longs for more of the Holy Spirit.* If you would meet men's pressing wants, turn the water of earth into the wine of Heaven, be a helper of Christ in His great and beneficent mission; you must hear a voice more authoritative and more persuasive even than Mary's, "Whatsoever He saith unto you do it." The Holy Ghost, whom you workers want, God gives to those that obey Him. Second: *For perplexed inquirers about the beginning of the Divine Life.* Earnestly seeking, and yet as it seems to you hopelessly, because of many intellectual difficulties, seeking the Holy Ghost, you can at least in your search resolve to

be from day to day honest, truthful, kind, faithful, because God claims it. Do the duty next to you. And so going on and looking up, you shall find God gives the Holy Ghost to those that *obey* Him. Those of whom Peter speaks had obeyed God in His appointment of assembling, and waiting, and prayer, and through that obedience received the highest blessing. The blind man's obedience was the condition of his receiving sight, the man of the withered hands' obedience was the condition of his receiving vigour, and so your obedience is the condition of your receiving the Holy Ghost. The cause is Divine Love, the condition is human obedience. Every act of genuine obedience is the widening and the deepening of the avenues of the soul to the inletting of the highest influences of Heaven, the "Holy Ghost."

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# Notes on the Epistle to the Colossians.

REFERRING our readers for all historical and critical remarks about this Epistle to the able Commentaries of LIGHTFOOT and ELLICOTT, and FARRER's more recent "*Life and Work of St. Paul*," it is nevertheless necessary to carry into and throughout our consideration of the entire Epistle, what was its main purpose. Throughout St. Paul is dealing with the twofold evil that had arisen in the Colossian Church—an error half Judaic, half Gnostic—an error that was theological and practical. It arose from the wrong conception of matter as inherently evil, and as demanding intervening mediators between the material system of things and God; and at making abstinence from contact with material things, as far as might be possible, very incumbent on the godly. This error has its modern analogies in Sacerdotalism, and in Pietism. To combat the error then and now the *Plenitude of Christ* must be preached; Christ the fulness therefore the all sufficient Mediator, therefore too the all sufficient Consecrator of the material system. The errors of the Ritualist, and of the Recluse are both met by this great fact.

## No. XVII.

### The Christian and The World.

"WALK IN WISDOM TOWARD THEM THAT ARE WITHOUT, REDEEMING THE TIME. LET YOUR SPEECH BE ALWAYS WITH GRACE, SEASONED WITH SALT, THAT YE MAY KNOW HOW YE OUGHT TO ANSWER EVERY MAN."—*Col.* iv. 5-6.

We have here some suggestions as to:—

I. THE CHRISTIAN'S RELATIONSHIP TO THE WORLD. It is implied: (1) *That he is to be distinct from the world.* To him all "men of the world" are in character, aims, pursuits to be as "them that are without." There is to be a contrast between him

and them as between those who are "within" and those who are "without" the assembly of the righteous, the church of the loving and the pure. But it is taught: (2) *That he is to have intercourse with the world.* This is in contradiction to the Colossian heresy of asceticism, and in contradiction, too, to the pietism that some sects affect in England to-day. "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without." This is the very opposite of walking away from them,

in separation into seclusion. Indeed, on this point we notice that seclusion from the world is : (α) *Impossible*. Even those who shun the social and political life of the world are drawn into its commerce very unwillingly, and in their best moods into its philanthropy also. Seclusion is : (β) *Undesirable*. It leads either to bigotry, as of the Pharisees, or to fragile life as of hot-house plants. Seclusion is : (γ) *Unlike Jesus Christ*. The streets, the cities, the houses of men, and of sinful men, their feasts, and their funerals, were frequented by the Holiest, who has left us the example that we should follow in His steps. But it is taught in our text : (3) *What is to mark the intercourse of the Christian with the world*. Two directions are given : (α) “*Walk in wisdom*.” This is more than knowledge, more

than discretion. It is a right use of knowledge, of the knowledge of God and of man. In that element of Godly thoughtfulness a Christian man is to move. (β) “*Redeeming the time*.” In the time you spend with men, buy up the time and make the best use of it for themselves and for you. No squandering of anything so precious as their time and yours is to be permitted in your intercourse with men. Thus it is taught the Christian must have to do with the world. There naturally follows a suggestion as to—

II. THE CHRISTIAN'S CONVERSATION WITH THE WORLD. It is to be distinguished by “grace,” pleasantness of the highest sort, “salt,” pungency of the truest kind. In a sentence we may say the influences of his conversation is to be good. (1) Because it is to *persuasive*. The higher form of



“grace,” divine acceptableness, may be implied here. The other form of it, human convincingness is certainly indicated. For this it must be appropriate: (*a*) as to *topic*, (*β*) as to *time*, (*γ*) as to *manner*. (2) Because it is to be *distinctive*. Not talk of tasteless insipidity, making no impression, but conversation as clear and definite in purifying influence as Christ meant the disciples themselves were to be when He said, “Ye are the salt of the earth.”

“Certain it is,” says Jeremy Taylor, “that as nothing better can do it, so there is nothing greater for which God made our tongues, next to reciting His praises, than to minister comfort to weary souls. And what greater measure can we have than that we should bring joy to our brother, who, with his weary eye, looks to heaven and round about,

and cannot find so much rest as to lay his eyelids together, then thy tongue should be tuned with heavenly accents, and make the weary soul to listen for light and ease. This is glory to thy voice, and employment fit for the brightest angel. I have seen the sun kiss the frozen earth, which was bound up with the images of death and the cold breath of the north, and then the waters break from their enclosures, and melt with joy, and run in useful channels. So is the heart of a sorrowful man under the discourses of a wise comforter. He breaks from the despairs of the grave: he blesses God, and he feels his life returning. God is pleased with no music below so much as in the thanksgiving songs of rejoicing comforted persons.”

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# Seeds of Sermons on St. Paul's Epistle to Philippians.

Having gone through all the verses in the Epistle to the Ephesians (see "Homilist," Vol. xxii. to xxviii.), we proceed to develop, with our usual brevity, the precious germs of truth contained in this letter. The following remarks, as a standing introduction, may contribute some portion of light to the whole Epistle:—Notice (1) *The residence of the persons addressed.* Philippi—whose ancient name was Crenides—was a city of Macedonia, and called after the name of Philip of Macedon, because he rebuilt and fortified it, B.C. 358, and afterwards colonised by Julius Cæsar, who invested the population with the privilege of a Roman City. It was the first place in Europe where the Gospel was preached by Paul, an account of which we have in the sixteenth chapter of the Acts. It was during his second missionary tour, and about A.D. 53.—Notice (2) *The occasion of the Epistle.* The contributions which the Philippians had made towards supplying the Apostle's necessities when a prisoner at Rome, evidently prompted its production.—Notice (3) *The scene from which the Epistle was addressed.* That it was from Rome where he was a prisoner is clear, from chapters i. 1-13, iv. 22. It would seem from the Epistle that he was expecting a speedy decision of his case, and hoped to obtain his release. Epaphroditus had been despatched to him from the Philippian Church with pecuniary contributions for the Apostle's relief, and on his return the Apostle entrusted this letter for conveyance. This would be about A.D. 63.—Notice (4) *The general character of the Epistle.* It is all but free from any censure, and breathes a warm and generous feeling through every part. The Epistle gives us the impression that the Philippian Church was one of the most pure, consistent, and generous, of that age. About 40 or 50 years after this Epistle was written, we are informed that Ignatius, on his way to martyrdom passed through Philippi, and was most warmly received in that city.]

## No. X.

### GENUINE SOCIALISM APOSTOLICALLY URGED.

"IF THERE BE THEREFORE ANY CONSOLATION IN CHRIST, IF ANY COMFORT OF LOVE," &c. *Phil.* ii. 1-4.

Notice: I. GENUINE SOCIALISM. Man is a social being, and his normal social condition is unity. Society is one body, and all men are members thereof, all animated by one life, and contributing to the good of the whole. This is the social ideal; but, alas! sin has created a schism. Instead of

unity there is a division everywhere, and the divided parts become antagonistic. The mission of the gospel is to remedy this, and to restore to perfect social unity. This unity, we infer from the text, includes three things. First: *Harmony of feeling* to one another. "That ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." Having noticed this point in the preceding article, we have only to repeat that the harmony can only be realised by all having

the one same object of reigning love. Two men, however different in the kind and measure of native talent, in the nature and measure of information, in the degree of culture, in the character of their opinions and beliefs, are indissolubly united in soul if their greatest love is centred in the same object. So of any number. The design of the gospel is to centre all men's love on God in Christ. There is no other way of producing this harmony; no theological system, no ecclesiastical organisation, no legislative enactment can do it, it is simply by this love that it can be done. This unity includes, Secondly: *Humility of deportment* among one another. "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." "This verse expresses the negative result of this unity of soul—that nothing will be done in strife—that is factiousness—(the word used in chap. i. 17) or 'vainglory,' nothing, that is, with the desire either of personal influence or of personal glory. For, he adds, each will esteem other better than himself, or rather, will hold that his neighbour is worthy of higher consideration, and a higher place of dignity than himself (comp. the use of the

word in Rom. xiii. 1; 1 Pet. ii. 13, of temporal dignity), for the idea is of the ascription to others, not of moral superiority, but of a higher place and honour. Self-assertion will be entirely overborne. So he teaches us elsewhere that "charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own" (1 Cor. xiii. 4, 5).—*Dr. Barry.* The proud, the haughty, the supercilious, are not only the disturbers of social unity, they are the destroyers of it. According to the law of souls they loathe and recoil from all arrogance and pretension in others, hence the exhortation, "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory." This unity includes, Thirdly: *Generous concern* one for another. "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." This does not mean, of course, that you are to neglect your own things. There are things that every man must attend to for himself, his own physical health, intellectual culture, &c., but it means that we are not to attend to our own things chiefly, and in such a way as to neglect the concerns of others. There is no real antagonism between the interest of self and the interest of others; on the contrary, we

can only secure our own individual well-being or happiness by promoting the interests of others. It is only as men become generously engrossed in the interest of others that they can realise their own individual happiness and perfection. The man rises only as he becomes self-oblivious; thus Paul felt, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live." The ego must be swallowed up in the non-ego—the spirit of universal benevolence. This is genuine socialism, and it is here urged by—

## II. APOSTOLIC PERSUASION.

"If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy that ye be likeminded." "There are here four influencing motives to inculcate the four Christian duties corresponding respectively, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, of one accord, of one mind. (1) If there be (with you as I assume) any consolation in Christ, *i.e.*, any consolation (but Ellicott, to avoid tautology, comfort following translates (*paraklesis*) exhortation, Rom. xii. 8), of which Christ is the source leading you to console me in

my afflictions borne for Christ's sake, ye ought to grant my request. (2) If there be any comfort of (*i.e.*, flowing from) love, the adjunct of consolation in Christ. (3) If any fellowship of (joint participation of) the Spirit (2 Cor. xiii. 14). As pagans meant those who were of one village and drank of one fountain, how much greater is the union which conjoins those who drink of the same Spirit (1 Cor. xii. 4). (4) If any bowels (tender emotions) and mercies (compassions, Col. iii. 12), the adjuncts of fellowship of the Spirit. The first and third mark the objective sources of the Christian life—Christ and the Spirit; the second and fourth, the subjective principle in believers. The opposites of the two pairs into which the four falls are reprobated in verses 3 and 4."—*Fausset*.

A man like the Apostle would not have urged this true socialism with such mighty earnestness had he not been impressed with its importance, and what can be of greater importance than this unity among the race? For this Christ prayed the night before His death, "*That they all may be one as Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us.*"

# Homiletical Breviaries.

No. CCCL.

## The Divine Method of Estimating Human Conduct.

“IF THERE BE FIRST A WILLING MIND, IT IS ACCEPTED ACCORDING TO WHAT A MAN HATH, AND NOT ACCORDING TO THAT HE HATH NOT.”—  
2 Cor. viii. 12.

The new version reads thus : “For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according as a man hath, not according as he hath not.” I cannot but think this very clumsily worded. I much prefer the wording of Dr. Samuel Davidson : “For if there is first the readiness it is acceptable according to what it may have, not according to what it has not.” Neither of these versions give the Apostle’s idea better than the old one. The idea is that an honest unaffected desire of doing right is the test of God’s true servants. “Paul,” says Dr. Newman, “is speaking of almsgiving, but what he says seems to apply generally. He is laying down a principle which applies of course in many distinct cases, though he uses it with reference to one in particular.” Our subject is, that *the disposition of the heart, and not the doings of the man’s hands, constitute the essence of moral character*. We offer five remarks in relation to this fact. I. This fact is ATTESTED BY THE MOST AUTHORITATIVE MORAL TEACHER. Who was He? Christ, who had the absolute truth, who was sent from God. In the sermon on the mount He taught that he who lusted after a woman was an adulterer, that hated his brother was a murderer, that coveted a neighbour’s property was a thief, that the soul was the arena of moral actions, that there the moral battles were fought, victories won, and defeats endured. The old prophets indeed taught the same. “As a man thinketh in his heart so is he.” The essence of a moral act lies not in the muscular action, but in the mental volition. II. This fact ACCORDS WITH OUR SENSE OF JUSTICE. Were our characters to be judged by overt acts, we feel that the estimate would be incorrect. First : Because many of our overt acts *spring*



*not from intelligent motive.* How much is done outwardly from a sudden rush of impulse ; how often from passion do men use language which they would recall the moment after its utterance, they feel that the expression is not true to their natures, that it utterly misrepresents the average state of their hearts. So of deeds ; a man inflicts violence upon another, gives not unfrequently a mortal blow from the rush of passion—a minute afterwards he would undo the deed if he could, he feels it is untrue to his nature, the estimate would be incorrect, Secondly : Because many of our overt acts *misrepresent our motives.* Often do men perform what are considered *good* deeds from *bad* motives, and *bad* deeds from *good* motives. “By their fruits ye shall know them,” said Christ. But the “fruits” are not mere outward deeds, but the organic productions of the heart. III. This fact URGES THE NECESSITY OF HEART DISCIPLINE. “Keep thy heart with all diligence.” “Create in me a clean heart, O God.” All true reformations must begin with the heart. If you would remove a disease you must make the blood pure, if you would have all the streams of life clear and healthful you must purify the fountain. IV. This fact IS AN ENCOURAGEMENT TO THOSE WHO LACK THE MEANS TO EXECUTE THEIR BENEVOLENT WISHES. How many there are who, if they had the means, would bless their neighbours with benefactions, clothe the hungry, feed the naked, provide means for enlightening the ignorant, and comforting the sad. How sustaining the assurance that “if there be first a willing mind it is accepted according to what a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.” David would have built a temple for the Almighty, but he had not the opportunity, but it was well it was in his heart. The poor widow would have made munificent contributions, but had not the means : albeit because she had the heart she “cast in more than they all.” Some have the means to do good, but not the heart ; others have the heart, but not the means. The former are grubs in the universe, the latter are angels. V. This fact SUGGESTS UNEXPECTED REVELATIONS ON THE LAST DAY. Many who are regarded now as distinguished saints and philanthropists on account of their outward acts will appear as infamous then, and many who are regarded now as utterly useless on account of their lack of opportunities will appear as the truest disciples of Christ, and the greatest benefactors of their age. “We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or

bad." "*In* the body," how different in their nature and their number are the deeds performed *by* the body to those performed *in* the body. The latter are the *realities*, and *majorities*.

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No. CCCLI.

The Entire Destruction of Moral Evil.

"BECAME LIKE THE CHAFF OF THE SUMMER THRESHING-FLOORS : AND THE WIND CARRIED THEM AWAY, THAT NO PLACE WAS FOUND FOR THEM."—*Dan.* ii. 35.

The colossal image which appeared in the vision of the Babylonian monarch had not only a *historic* but a *moral* significance. It represents the moral evil prevalent amongst mankind in its mighty aggregate ; it stands for what Paul calls the "world." Moral evil here is associated with empire, with material wealth, civic splendour and commanding attractions, the biggest thing in the world, towering high above all else. The text declares its *utter* destruction. It is not only broken to pieces, levelled to the dust, but all its atoms are swept clean from the face of the earth. The subject is the *entire destruction of moral evil* in the world, and on this subject I offer three remarks :—

I. The utter ruin of moral evil is SUGGESTED BY PHILOSOPHY. What is moral evil? *Falsehood*. Can the false stand before the real? It is *selfishness*. Can the selfish stand before the tide of universal benevolence? It is *human*. Can the human stand before the Divine? Universal conscience is against moral evil, the immutable laws of the universe are against moral evil, the eternal God is against evil. It, therefore, cannot last ; it will be crushed sooner or later, it is only a question of time.

II. The utter ruin of moral evil is PREDICTED BY HISTORY. Portions of this colossal image have been broken, and bit by bit it has been crumbling for centuries. Moral good has never, through all the ages, lost anything, can never lose anything ; but moral evil is decaying and decayable. Its past losses predict its future ruin, its ruin has been going on ever since the first rays of the gospel broke on the human soul, and it must proceed until it is no more.

III. The utter ruin of moral evil is ATTESTED BY INSPIRATION. Christ came to destroy the works of the devil, He has inflicted a bruise upon the head of the serpent, that bruise can never be healed, it is working on to death. We may feel assured that one

day God will "put Satan under our feet." He will put down all rule and authority, and there will come the "restitution of all things," all things pertaining to the holiness and happiness of the moral universe. "The creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption." "The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ."

CONCLUSION :—Let us rejoice that moral evil shall have an end, that its every cloud shall be swept away, and the heavens left in the sunny azure of virtue and bliss, all its discordant notes hushed. May it not be that the river of grace and truth, which has been widening in breadth, deepening in depth, and swelling in volume for many a long century, shall flood all human nature, and quench for ever all the hells in man's universe?

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No. CCCLII.

The True Teacher.

"THEN WILL I TEACH TRANSGRESSORS THY WAYS, AND SINNERS SHALL BE CONVERTED TO THEE."—*Psalm li. 13.*

Though our translators insert the word "then," they do not insert the thought. The whole context shows that it was David's resolve and vow when he passed into the experiences for which he was yearning, *then* to teach, &c. We find in this vow of his: (1) The QUALIFICATIONS for a true teacher. Recalling to what the "then" refers, we find that a true teacher must be a man marked by (a) Penitence and loathing for sin. (β) Purity of heart. (λ) Fellowship with God. (2) The PEOPLE a true teacher seeks to bless "Transgressors:" men who have broken the divine law. "Sinners," a wider name describing all who neglect, as well as all who violate that law. What a school! Such was His who came "not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." The lost. (3) The THEME a true teacher unfolds. "Thy ways." This may mean, as it continually does, (a) God's *commandments*; i.e., His ways for man to take; or (β) God's *habits* of grace, justice, mercy. "My ways are not your ways, &c. (4) The METHOD a true teacher employs. Teaching is the noblest occupation, the highest art, the strongest agency of man. "We *persuade* men." (5) The RESULT the true teacher seeks. "Converted to Thee." Turned back from evil; turned in thought, mind, will, character, towards God.

URLIAH R. THOMAS.

No. CCCLIII.

**God in Relation to Human Work.**

"THE LORD STOOD UPON A WALL MADE BY A PLUMBLINE, WITH A PLUMBLINE IN HIS HAND."—*Amos vii. 7.*

All men are workers, the world is "full of labour." The words suggest two facts in relation to it. I. God has a COMMANDING VIEW OF IT. "He stands upon the wall" high up, so that every portion comes within His glance. He observes: (1) Its quality; good or bad. (2) Its variety, overt or occult. (3) Its influence, useful or pernicious. Solemn thought, that God's eye is on us in all our activities, and that the most secret act eludes not His glance. To Him at last we must yield an account of all things done in the body. II. God TESTS THE CHARACTER OF IT. "*A plumbline in his hand.*" The mason uses the "*plumbline*" to determine the straightness of the wall, and thus God tests the character of human actions. What is God's "*plumbline*?" (1) His law as inscribed upon the human conscience. By this He tries *all* men, heathen, &c. (2) God's law as written in the Scriptures. By this He tries all who possess the revelation. (3) God's law as embodied in Christ. By this He tries all who have the Gospel.

*The Preacher's Scrap Book.***THE CROSS OF CHRIST.**

CHRISTIANS talk constantly and excitedly about the Cross of Christ. They glory in its agonies, and deride the wisdom of the heathen who rejected it. Churches constantly ring with the bold avowal, "The Greeks may call it foolishness, and modern philosophy may sneer at it, but we are not ashamed of 'the Cross of Christ.'" "Show me the Cross," said a zealous pawnbroker who vaunted the sincerity of his faith. "Show me the Cross, and I'll approach it?" I knew him pretty well, and if the "approach" he spoke of was meant to imply a readiness to suffer any personal sacrifice of himself, my impression was very strong that he would not go too near! At all events, if enthusiasts are not ashamed of the Cross of Christ, they are often mightily ashamed of their own when adversity comes; but our Lord's words

are : " Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me." *His* cross, my friend, not " the Cross of Christ." He who bore that cross literally—one Simon of Cyrenes—was forced to do so by the Roman soldiery, and nothing is said of his deriving any spiritual benefit from that enforced labour. On the other hand, none but He who " bowed the heavens and came down"—none but the Redeemer Himself—could have borne the spiritual agony with which all hell assailed Him " on the accursed tree," until He said, " It is finished." We could not bear *that* cross which redeemed the world by opening " a new and living way" to heaven for all mankind. What, then, does our Lord mean by *our* cross? How many in all Christendom have earnestly and searchingly inquired, " What is my own cross?" For the most part, the very existence of such a thing as the cross of our individual salvation is positively ignored, or if confessed, it is a vague confession, leading to nothing; for to use the common phrase, " I am the chief of sinners," and other inflated phrases like it, is not to define a special cross, but to stifle self-examination in a foam of words. All truly pious thought and affection are absorbed in that other cross which we cannot bear, and are not commanded to bear. " To Thy cross I cling " is the passionate self-dedication of the very devout, to which they add, " Just as I am!" " Just as I am!" But our Lord did not say, " Follow Me, just as you are, just as you are." He said, " If any man will come after Me, let him *deny himself* and take up *his* cross and follow Me, for whosoever will save his life shall lose it." Surely this absolute self-denial, even to the laying down of our unregenerate life with its affections and lusts, cannot mean " just as you are ; " but must imply a vital change of character, and habit of action, based on the mortification of our selfish nature.

Some change, indeed, is generally said to take place, but it is too often a change from mere carelessness, to mere inflammatory thought. In too many cases nothing else is changed. The man is as bad as before, according to his own declaration, " Just as I am," " Just as I am." Such people do not care to know that they are to be saved by *bearing* their *own* cross, not by *looking* at " the Cross of Christ." . . . . Our cross is pre-eminently the disappointment of our dearest earthly hopes and wishes, whatever they may be.

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## *Literary Notices.*

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[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books, it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

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### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

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NATURAL ELEMENTS OF REVEALED RELIGION. By Rev. GEORGE MATHESON, D.D. London : James Nisbet, 21, Berner's Street.

The Baird Lecture was founded, as our readers are aware, by James Baird, Esq., a few years ago, for the illustration and defence of what the General Assembly in the Church of Scotland consider vital truths, as well as for the promotion of Christian knowledge and Christian work, and also to expose and refute errors and unbeliefs. This is the lecture for 1881, and it is in every respect a very able one. The following extract from the preface of the author will indicate the purpose of the book :—"The aim of these pages is not to trace an historical development. It is rather to look at Christianity as a completed whole, and to analyse it, as far as it will admit of analysis, into its component pre-Christian parts. In tracing the connection of these parts we have sought no order of time. We have not tried to show that one ancient system has grown out of another, but that the need which one neglects has been appropriated by another. The unity we have sought to exhibit is not a unity reached by historical reactions, but the unity of a common idea, which must ultimately enfold all the isolated fragments, however scattered in time and space." The subjects detailed in this book are :—"Christianity and Nature ; the First pre-Christian Problem ; the Second pre-Christian Problem ; the Third pre-Christian Problem ; Natural Theology in the Light of Revelation ; Immortality in the Light of Revelation." In addition to all this there is an appendix consisting of some very useful notes. The author shows himself to be a student of the best philosophical literature, a profound thinker, and a vigorous logician. In saying this we do not consider that all the parts of the book are well established, or all the sentences very clearly written. Albeit few men in any Church could write a book of such distinguished merit.

CUTHBERT OF LINDISFARNE. By ALFRED C. FRYER. London : S. W. Partridge.

Wherefore the use of raising from the grave of eleven centuries such an ascetic pietist as old Cuthbert, or any of his order, or his race of any time or country? We may ask, wherefore the good of fictitious literature, the literature that now crowds the libraries and weighs down the book stalls of Smith and others? To us the history of men of bygone times, who struggled for what they believed truth, and suffered for conscience, however diseased, is far more healthy in its influence on the mind than the best productions of the mercenary traders in fiction. The history of Cuthbert, of Landisfarne, is fraught with interest and quickening inspiration. The biography is told with discrimination, brevity and force.

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THE CREED OF THE APOSTLE OF ST. JOHN. London : Bickers & Son.

This volume is much to our liking. It is intelligent, thoughtful, clear, and catholic. The author teaches that the creed of John was the creed of Christ, or rather, Christ Himself. This is true. No less than thirty or forty times does John in his Gospel teach that faith in Christ, and not faith in what theologians write and say about Him, is the true creed. Theologians, ecclesiastics, and nominal Christians have forgotten this, and the consequence is that the living, loving, personal Christ is lost in the creeds, or worse, calumniated by the creeds. Preachers almost everywhere give the chemistry of the rose, which has neither flavour nor beauty, and not the breathing, fragrant, and crimson-tinted flower itself. Ah, me! what a contrast between the Christ of the Gospel and the Christ of the creeds! We heartily recommend this little book to every preacher of Christ.

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LIFE MORE ABUNDANT. By THEODORE MONOD. London : Morgan & Scott.

This address was reported in *The Christian*, and re-published by the consent of the author. Those who are acquainted with the excellent author's productions will expect to find the conventionally evangelical and the religiously earnest and devout.

IN MEMORIAM: THOMAS CARLYLE. By G. HUNT JACKSON. London: Office of *Christian Age*.

We have to apologise to the author for not noticing these beautiful poems before. They are twelve in number, and their subjects are various. The author has undoubtedly the glowing temperament and the creative faculty of the poet, and in his utterances he appears in the stately march and melodious chime of a true bard. Take the following extract from a composition in memory of Thomas Carlyle:—

“’Tis light, not darkness, that extinguishes  
The glory and the brightness of the stars.  
The lesser to the greater softly yields,  
Melting away before the glowing morn.  
’Tis even so with mental luminaries  
That rise and shine upon the world’s dark night.  
They lighten for awhile the minds of men,  
And then retire, no more to be reveal’d  
To outward sense. Yet are they but eclipsed  
In light; the glory of eternity  
Encircling them with everlasting day—  
Mortality all swallow’d up of life.”

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THE BOOK OF JUDGES. By GEORGE C. M. DOUGLAS, D.D.  
Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark.

This is another of Messrs. Clark’s excellent volumes belonging to “Handbooks for Bible Classes,” and it is one, though very condensed, that is comprehensive and of great value. The Book of Judges is fraught with stirring interest, strange exploits, and much difficulty. Dr. Douglas has handled it in a masterly way, thrown light upon it, and revealed it as an instrument of moral instruction to all mankind. We shall be glad to give a prompt notice of the other volumes as they appear from time to time.

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THE DAY AFTER DEATH; OR, OUR FUTURE LIFE ACCORDING TO SCIENCE. Translated from the French of LOUIS FIGUIER.  
London: Richard Bentley & Son.

The subject of this book is one of pre-eminent interest, race-wide, profound, and enduring. The volume consists of twenty chapters, besides the introduction and an epilogue. The subjects of these chapters are—Man is the Result of the Triple Alliance of the Body, Soul, and Life—Of what does Death Consist?—What becomes after Death of the Body, Soul, and Life?—Where does the Super-human Being reside?—Do all Men pass after Death to the State of

Superhuman Beings?—Re-incarnations of Perverse Souls—Re-incarnation of Children who have died in Infancy—What are the Attributes of the Superhuman Being?—Physical, Shape, Senses, Degree of Intelligence—Faculties of the Superhuman Being—What becomes of the Superhuman Being after Death?—Deaths, Resurrections, and new Incarnations in the Ethereal Spaces—Physical and Geographical Description of the Sun—The Sun—Definitive Sojourn of Souls arrived at the highest degree of the Celestial Hierarchy—The Sun is the final and common sojourn of the Souls, which come from the Earth—Physical Constitution of the Sun—This Heavenly Body a mass of Burning Gas—The Inhabitants of the Sun are purely Spiritual beings—The Solar Rays are emanations from Spiritual Beings that live in the Sun—These Beings thus produce Vegetable and Animal Life on Earth—The Continuity of Solar Radiation inexplicable by Physicists, explained by emanations from the Souls of the Inhabitants of the Sun—The Worship of Fire and the Adoration of the Sun in Different Nations, Ancient and Modern—What are our Relations with Superhuman Beings?—What is the Animal?—The Souls of Animals—Migrations of Souls through the Bodies of Animals—What is the Plant?—The Plant can Feel—How difficult it is to distinguish Plants from Animals—General Chain of Living Beings—Does Man exist elsewhere than on the Earth?—Description of the Planets—Plurality of the Inhabited Worlds—That which took place on Earth for the Creation of Organised Beings must have equally taken place in the other Planets—Successive order of the appearance of Living Beings on our Globe—The same succession must have taken place in each Planet—The Planetary Man—The Planetary Man, like the Terrestrial Man, is transformed after Death into a Superhuman Being, and passes into the Ether—Proofs of the Plurality of Human Existences and of Re-incarnations—Without the aid of this doctrine, the Presence of Man upon the Earth is Inexplicable, likewise the unequal conditions of Human Life, and the fate of Children who die in Infancy—Faculties peculiar to Certain Children, Aptitudes and vocations among Men are additional proofs of re-incarnations—Explanation of Phrenology—Descartes' innate ideas, and Dugald Stewart's principle of Causality can only be explained by the Plurality of Lives—Vague Remembrances of our Former Existences—Summary of the system of Plurality of Existence—Answers to some objections, First: The immortality of the soul, which serves as the basis to this system is not demonstrated.

Second : We have no remembrance of former existences. Third : This system is only the metempsychosis of the ancients. Fourth : This system is confounded with Darwinism. Sequel to objections—Difficulty of understanding how the rays of the Sun—Material substances—can be the germs of souls, immaterial substances—Practical rules resulting from the facts and principles developed in this work—To elevate one's soul by the practice of virtues, and by trying to acquire a knowledge of nature and its laws through science—To render public worship to the divinity—We should preserve the remembrance of the dead—We should not fear death—Death is but an insensible transition from one state to another, it is not an end but a metamorphosis—Impressions of the dying—Those who die young are loved by the gods. This book contains a great variety of scientific information, much vigorous logic, and a profusion of original and speculative thought. Though much of the speculation seems to us to be unsupported by fact or argument, it is nevertheless mentally exciting and religiously inspired. The long series of incarnations, into which the author says the soul passes after it has quitted its present organisations, will, he maintains, if it continues to grow in spiritual intelligence and virtue, reach the very centre of the universe, the fountain of life and light. The tendency of this book is intellectually stirring and morally uplifting.

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THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE OCEANS. By J. WILLIAMS, F.R.G.S.,  
London : George Philip & Son, Fleet Street.

"This little treatise," says the author, "must be regarded only as an attempt to present the leading facts of the geography of the oceans, in a simple and systematic manner, and is mainly intended for the use of students who have to pass a special examination in this subject. It may also be useful to those who wish to supplement their general geographical knowledge, which is ordinarily limited to the Physical and Political Geography of the Countries of the World, by an acquaintance with the main facts relative to the great world of waters." This volume gives in a most interesting and instructive way a general geography of the oceans, physical geography of the oceans, and the geography of particular oceans, such as the Atlantic, the Pacific, the Indian, the Antarctic, and the Arctic. It contains also a list of maps and charts of very superior kind. It is a book of great worth, and will, we have no doubt, have a very extensive circulation.





## *Leading Homily.*

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### THE LARGENESS AND SIMPLICITY OF THE PRIMITIVE CREED.\*

“Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, was this grace given, to preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery which from all ages have been hid in God, who created all things; to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the Church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.” *Eph. iii. 8-12. (Revised Version).*



HE noticeable thing is the largeness, the simplicity—if I may add the word, the infiniteness—of the primitive creed. On no other than the broadest basis can you build up a Church which shall be truly catholic—which shall embrace the world. In the face of the rapid and violent disintegration of Christian belief—with M. Rochefort in Paris parodying the Christian sacraments, and initiating little children by a form of his own into what

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\* An address delivered in connection with the Church Congress at Newcastle-on-Tyne, October 4th.

he calls the gospel of free thought, and the International Federation of Freethinkers holding its three days' conference in London; and delighting to trample on some of the most cherished hopes of man by announcing that the *Union Démocratique* of France is organising a great freethought demonstration on All Souls' Day—we cannot afford to bandy words upon disputable propositions—to divide ourselves into divers and almost hostile camps, each with its doctrine and interpretation; we dare not break up a great Church, with its mission as clearly stamped upon it as ever mission was stamped upon a Church planted even by Apostles' hands, into fragmentary and partisan organisations, powerless because disunited, incapable of discipline because following the voice of no one leader, recognising the sound of no one battle-cry. If union ever was strength, it would be strength now, and union is only possible on the broad basis of an historical, not a theoretic, Christianity. But I pass on once more. And what is the function of men—the part they have to play in this great conflict terminable only with the Second Advent of Christ, between light and darkness, truth and falsehood, good and evil? What is the office of the Church, in the word's largest sense, as the divinely endowed, but yet human, institution, which it pleases God to use as His instrument in carrying out these far-reaching, eternal purposes? "The Prophetical Office of the Church" was the title of one of the great theological treatises with which John Henry Newman enriched the literature of his country while he was yet the vicar of a parish in England, and before he became a Cardinal-Prince of Rome; and so Paul seems to regard the Church, as a

whole, as a vast institution for prophesying to men in the name and for the truth of God (Eph. iv. 7, fol.). I am not careful to attempt an exact exegesis of this famous passage. Richard Hooker and others have done this, with more or less felicity. But it is evident that here is no thought of order, but of function. It is no question whether there are three or four ranks in the hierarchy of the Church, or even more. We need not even stay to discuss, with any pretence to accuracy, the possible discriminations in the writer's own mind of the fourfold elements into which the work of ministering is distributed, and to which the edifying of the body of Christ is due. With our imperfect sources of information we could not be sure of our conclusions, with whatever parade of learning they might be marshalled, even when we had arrived at them. The great proof, we know, of at least one Apostle was that "through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, from Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum, he had fully preached the Gospel of Christ." To teach himself, and to charge others to teach; to give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching, to be able, by holding to the faithful Word according to the teaching, both to exhort in the sound doctrine and to convict the gain-sayers—this was Paul's highest conception of the office of a Christian Bishop. Even when the kingdom of God was being set up in the world, they were the prophetic rather than the regal acts of its Divine Founder that struck men's minds, and drew the crowds after Him. "A great prophet," they said, "hath risen up among us; and God hath visited His people." And so it seems to me that now people are not seeking priests to absolve or to offer sacrifice for them, but

prophets who cant each them and guide them. Prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers—these are the needs of the Church to-day. Priests, possibly, for quiet ordinary times, but prophets for crises. And if anyone cannot see that the Church is passing through a crisis now—fiercer, sharper, more intense than any which has tried her for generations—he cannot read the most obvious signs of this time. And can we, who claim, sometimes too exclusively, the prerogative of teaching, feel that we are teaching men that which it most concerns them to know? Are we helping them to be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine? Are we enabling them to be babes in malice, but in mind to be men? Have we ourselves that grasp of truth which comes of experimental conviction, and of nothing besides, and which alone can make men strong or free? To build up the body of Christ by the spirit of prophecy is no common gift and no ordinary responsibility. To be able rightly to divine the word of truth is putting the highest faculty to the noblest use. What names stand out most conspicuous on the pages of the Church's story? The names of her great prophets and teachers—men like Athanasius, and Gregory, of Nazianzum, and Chrysostom, and Augustine, and Bernard, and Savonarola, and Luther. These were they who stirred the hearts of their generation, and made religion as a living force and not as a crystallised tradition, possible in the world. I have been looking over the pages of our earliest ecclesiastical historian to gather up the story of how the Christian Church was first planted in Northumberland, in the days of good King Oswald, just twelve centuries ago. In the seventh century it

had two famous Bishops—St. Aidan and St. Cuthbert, with an interval of fifty years between them—who took the title of their see, not from Newcastle, but from Lindisfarne. This is the story of Aidan : “ It is related that, when King Oswald asked for a prelate from the Scots to minister to himself and to his people the word of faith, there was first sent to him a man of an austere disposition, who, when after preaching for some time he made no progress, returned to his country and related in the assembly of the elders that he had not been able to effect anything in teaching the people to whom he had been sent on account of their being intractable men, and of a harsh and barbarous disposition. Then they held a great debate in Council as to what was to be done ; and Aidan, who was present, said to the priest concerning whom the meeting was held, ‘ It seems to me, brother, that you have been too hard with your unlearned hearers, and have not afforded them, according to the Apostolic teaching, first the milk of easier doctrine, until being nourished by degrees by the Word of God, they should be capable of receiving the more perfect, and of performing the sublimer precepts of God ;’ which being heard, the faces and eyes of all that sat there were turned towards him, and they earnestly discussed what he had said, and decreed that he himself was worthy of the episcopate, and ought to be sent to teach the unbelieving and unlearned, since above all things he was proved to be endued with the grace of discretion, which is the mother of virtues ; and accordingly they ordained him and sent him to preach. And he, in course of time, as he had before appeared to be adorned with the guidance of discretion, so afterwards exhibited the other virtues



also." (Bede, E.H. iii., ch. 5, Gidby's Transl.). Does not this remind you of another prophet, of whom it is written, "He spake the Word unto them as they were able to hear it?" And not less instructive is the story of Cuthbert. "Not only," says Bede, "did he afford to his own monastery both admonitions and examples of regular life, but he also took care to convert the common people who dwelt around far and wide from a life of foolish customs to the love of heavenly joys. Therefore he frequently went forth from the monastery, sometimes on horseback, but oftener on foot, and, going to the surrounding villages, taught the erring the way of truth. Furthermore, so great was Cuthbert's skill in speaking, so great his desire of enforcing what he took in hand, and such the light of his angelic countenance, that no one present presumed to conceal from him the secrets of his heart: all openly revealed by confessing what they had done, because, forsooth, they thought that these same things could in no ways escape his knowledge, and wiped out the sins they confessed by worthy fruits of penitence, as he enjoined. Moreover, he was wont mostly to traverse those places and to preach in those little villages, which, being situate afar off on steep and rugged mountains, others had a horror of visiting, and which repelled the access of teachers both by their poverty and rusticity. These, nevertheless, he, willingly devoting himself to the pious labour, instructed with so great industry and skilful teaching that often when he had gone forth from the monastery he did not return home sometimes for a whole month, but, tarrying among the mountaineers, he called the rustic people, both by the word of preaching and by the work of virtue, to heavenly things." (*Ibid.*

iv. ch. 27). And does not this remind us of more than one incident in the apostolic story of Paul and Barnabas among the rude goatherds of Lycaonia, winning them from their heathenism by the simple preaching of a living God, whose witness was in the rain and fruitful seasons? Or, again, at Ephesus, when, through the preaching of Paul, "they that believed came and confessed, and showed their deeds, and the Word of God grew mightily and prevailed?" *Alia tempora, alii mores.* The fashions and the thoughts of the men of Northumberland are not the same to-day as they were 1,200 years ago. But the same qualities are required in a bishop now that the historian signalises in Aidan: "His zeal for peace and charity, for continence and humility; his mind the conqueror of anger and avarice, the contemner both of pride and vainglory; his diligence in both doing and teaching the divine commands; his practice of reading and watching; his authority, becoming a priest, in rebuking the proud and powerful; and likewise his tenderness in comforting the afflicted, in strengthening the weak, in relieving and defending the poor." A noble portrait of a bishop, simply and touchingly painted. It is by such teaching as this, illustrated by such a life as this, that even the hardest and rudest hearts can be won to the more excellent way. May he who will succeed to the episcopate of Aidan and Cuthbert be as largely endowed with these graces as were they! They are the only weapons which the Church can wield with the assurance that they will prevail. They have been proved again and again, under every variety of circumstances. Whether for the Christian warfare of the seventh or of the nineteenth century, they are pieces of the "panoply

of God." They are the forms in which the Spirit of Christ demonstrates His power. They put to flight the armies of the aliens. They confirm the hopeful, they revive the despondent. They strengthen believers; they take away all occasion from the adversary to speak reproachfully. We have no right to speak of the failure of the Gospel till these methods have been fairly and fully tried. The evil heart of unbelief is to be exorcised, not by magic after the fashion of the sons of Sceva at Ephesus, but by moral forces acting under their normal conditions, corroborated by the Spirit of God. If these fail, we may indeed despair of Christianity. But, O Spirit of Christ, Spirit of hope and confidence and joy in believing, lift up the hands that hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees. Inspire Thy Church with wisdom and with zeal, and send forth its soldiers conquering and to conquer in the strength of Christ's mighty Name.

JAMES FRASER, D.D.,  
*Bishop of Manchester.*

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CREEDS.—"I believe these ranting follies (referring to certain creeds), in the name of Jesus, have done more to damage His cause than all the utterances of that scientific scepticism, whose attacks seem to be the only danger that our champions now dread. It matters not whether any individual Churchman may hold the opinion of the elder Calvinists and of their modern interpreters, who, even in popular discourse, can say, 'When the damned jingle the burning irons of their torment, they shall say, "For ever!" 'When they howl, echo cries, 'For ever!\*' or whether he accept the hypothesis of conditional immortality, as clearly and ably set forth by one of our own most distinguished men, that the 'everlasting punishment' of the wicked is the taking away of an endless life. I say it matters not so far as the Gospel message is concerned, for it seems to me that perhaps that theory containing most of appeal to the fear of physical suffering offers least deterrent influence against the commission of sin."

BISHOP DUDLEY, D.D.—(The Bohlen Lecture).

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\* *Epitaph* quoted by Farrar on "Eternal Hope."

# The Preacher's Homiletical Commentary.

## HOMILETIC SKETCHES ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

**OUR PURPOSE.**—Many learned and devout men have gone *Philologically* through this **TEHELIM**, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough **HOMILETIC** treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

**OUR METHOD.**—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1) **THE HISTORY** of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2) **ANNOTATIONS** of the passages. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase or allusion that may occur.—(3) **THE ARGUMENT** of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4) **THE HOMILETICS** of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts and indicate such sermonizing methods as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

### No. CLXIII.

#### The Perpetuity of Divine Mercy.

“O GIVE THANKS UNTO THE LORD FOR HE IS GOOD, FOR HIS MERCY  
ENDURETH FOR EVER,” &c. Ps. cxviii. 1-4.

**HISTORY:** This Psalm is the last of that series which began with cxiii. This series constituted the Hallel, the songs of the chief Festivals. This hymn rings with a reality and burns with a holy fire. It is probable that it was composed not long after the return from Babylonian exile, and sung at the dedication of the second Temple. Some,

however, suppose that it was intended for the Feast of Tabernacles (Ezra iii. 14), others for the laying of the foundation stone of the temple. But it is more probable for the dedication. Those who accept it as such, regard the first four verses as sung at *setting out* on the occasion, the next four verses as sung *on the way*; verse 19 as sung

on going in; the next seven verses as sung by those who received the festal procession; and the next four verses as sung by those inside. Verse 28 is the answer of those who have arrived. The last verse as sung altogether.

*The portion of Psalm sung at the setting out.*

ANNOTATIONS:—Ver. 1.—“*O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever.*” “These words were sung by the Levites at the time of laying the foundation stone of the second temple (Ezra iii. 11). But they are a common formula of thanksgiving.”—*Canon Cook*. This same language is found at the commencement of three other Psalms (cvi., cvii., cxxxvi.).

Ver. 2-4.—“*Let Israel now say that his mercy endureth for*

*ever. Let the house of Aaron now say, that his mercy endureth for ever. Let them now that fear the Lord say, that his mercy endureth for ever.*”

“These verses seem to contain a sort of climax: (1) Israel in general. (2) The house of Aaron. (3) The true Israel.”

ARGUMENT: The Psalm consists of two main divisions: the first nineteen verses are sung by the people in a festive procession, led by priests and Levites, approaching the holy place. The nineteenth verse which should end with a full stop, being sung just as they enter the gates. The second part (verse 20-27) is sung by those who receive the procession. Verse 28 is the answer of those who have just reached the temple; while the whole body join in the concluding ascription.

HOMILETICS:—As we cannot, as is our wont, so group all the parts of this Psalm as to bring them under one general title, we shall give several brief homiletic sketches as we proceed. The subject of these first four verses is the *perpetuity of divine mercy*.—“*His mercy endureth for ever.*” Two things are suggested in relation to this:—

I. This is a subject for JOYOUS GRATITUDE. “*O give thanks unto the Lord,*” &c. Why should the perpetuity of Divine mercy inspire such fervent gratitude? First: Because all men that now live require mercy. All men



are so *guilty* and *depraved* as to render them more or less unhappy here, and miserable hereafter. Mercy alone can remove their guilt, sweep away the dense cloud of sin that fills them with terrible remorse and foreboding, and mercy alone can remove the depravity by a thorough renewal of nature. Mercy creates men anew in Christ Jesus in good works. Thank God that this mercy is enduring, and will continue with us until our last hour. Secondly: Because all men that will hereafter live require mercy. The number of generations that will appear on this earth when we are gone and our name buried in the oblivion of ages are known only to ONE. But not one individual in all the generations will be able to do without mercy. Thank God, then, that mercy is to run on to the crash of doom. Another thing suggested in relation to this point is that

II. This is a subject for the CELEBRATION OF ALL MEN. It is for Israel in general, "*Let Israel now say*," that is for the great bulk of the Hebrew people, including all the unbelieving and unrenewed. "*Let the house of Aaron now say*," that is the whole priesthood, all the men set apart to conduct the worship of Almighty God, and to lead on the souls of men to true knowledge, purity, and peace. "*Let them that now fear the Lord say*," that is all the truly religious part of Israel, whether of the priesthood or the laity. This perpetuity of mercy therefore, is a subject in which men of all characters, of all lands, of all times may triumphantly rejoice. Here we can all meet, both the rich and the poor. It has been said that mercy is like a rainbow, that you must never look for it after night, that it shines not in the other world. I would rather say, it is like a bright constellation of stars, resplendent even in the midnight sky.

## No. CLXIV.

## God the Deliverer and Defender of His People.

"I CALLED UPON THE LORD IN DISTRESS," &c. Ps. cxviii. 5-7.

*Portion of Psalm Sung on the Way.*

ANNOTATIONS :—Ver 5.—" *I called upon the Lord in distress.*" There is nothing extraordinary in this. Who has not called upon the Lord in great distress? It is the law of humanity. "*The Lord answered me and set me in a large place.*" This, alas, is not common, it is somewhat rare. How few of all the cries that go up to heaven from this world of sorrow and distress, so reach the eye and heart of the Infinite as to gain an answer. And why? Because they are selfish, unbelieving, &c. The words "*set me*" are not in the Hebrew. The true version would be "I called upon in a narrow place (straits), and the Lord answered me in a wide place." The reference is to the deliverance of the people from their captivity and

setting them at large both in a temporal and spiritual sense.

Ver. 6.—"*The Lord is on my side ; I will not fear. What can man do unto me ?*" That is, the Lord is for me. The Lord is the name by which the Almighty became known to Moses and to Israel in the deliverance from Egypt (Ex. vi. 3). It occurs no less than twenty-one times in this Psalm, exclusive of the last verse.

Ver. 7.—"*The Lord taketh my part with them that help me, therefore, shall I see my desire upon them that hate me.*" "Rather, 'Jehovah is on my side with them that help me,' not as if Jehovah were one of many helpers, but among helpers to help them."—Fuller.

HOMILETICS :—In these verses the Almighty is presented as the *Deliverer and Defender of His people.*

I. THE DELIVERER. "*The Lord answered me, and set me in a large place.*" The deliverance seemed to have consisted in raising him from a circumscribed to

an expansive position. The expression "*in distress*," means out of straightness, in allusion, no doubt, to the captivity of Babylon. The expression, "*set me in a large place*," points to the unrestricted freedom which they had on their return to their own land. The Almighty is constantly delivering men in this way, lifting them from the narrow to the broad. (1) He does so secularly. How often by His providence does He take men from the narrowness of poverty out into the broad places of worldly prosperity. (2) He does so intellectually. He takes men from the narrowness of ignorance and prejudice, and habit, out into the broad places of knowledge and freedom. (3) He does this spiritually. From the narrowness of guilt and corruption He takes men by the Gospel of His Son, into the broad realms of forgiveness and virtue.\*

II. The DEFENDER. "*The Lord is on my side, I will not fear: what can man do unto me?*" Which means "The Lord is for me." First: Because of this we need not fear. "*I will not fear, what can man do unto me?*" If He is for us, who can be against us? "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble, therefore we will not fear," &c. If He is for us, we have not only the whole universe for us, but even our very enemies shall be made to subserve our interest. Secondly: Because of this we shall conquer. "*The Lord taketh my part with them that help me: therefore shall I see my desire upon them that hate me.*" The word "*desire*" is not in the Hebrew. The words should be "and I shall look upon my haters," look with calm defiance, look with expectant triumph.

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\* See "Homilist," Vol. xlii., p. 110.

“ The Lord appears my helper now,  
 Nor is my faith afraid  
 What all the sons of earth can do,  
 Since heaven affords its aid.

“ ’Tis safer, Lord, to hope in Thee,  
 And have my God my friend,  
 Than trust in men of high degree,  
 And on their truth depend.”

## No. CLXV.

## Confidence in God.

“ IT IS BETTER TO TRUST IN THE LORD,” &c. Ps. cxviii. 8-13.

*Portion Sung on the Way (2).*

ANNOTATIONS:—Ver. 8, 9. “*It is better to trust in the Lord.*”

“The reference,” says Prebendary Young, “is to the opposition of the Samaritans to the building of the Temple, the intrigues of the Persian Satraps, and the feebleness of the monarch. The work was stopped for a while under Artaxerxes (Psuedo-Smerdis) (Ez. iv. 17-23). Even when, on the death of Artaxerxes, Haggai and Zechariah roused the people to recommence the building, the Persian nobles still tried to hinder it, “But the eye of the Lord God was upon the elders of the Jews that they (the Persian nobles) could not cause them to cease,” until the matter was referred to Darius, and a favourable answer came back from him” (Ezra v. 1-5).

Ver. 10, 11.—“*All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the Lord will I destroy them.*” In the name of Jehovah it is certain that I shall destroy them. “All nations” must be understood, not historically, but poetically. It has been remarked that the repetition four times of the words, “they compassed me about,” marks the pertinacious animosity of the enemies described.

Ver. 12. “*They compassed me about like bees.*” Like bees that swarm in multitudes and with malignant instincts. “*They are quenched as the fire of thorns.*” Attacking with prodigious rage, and seeming as though they would utterly destroy the devoted city, they suddenly perish, and no trace of them abides, as fire among thorns

blazes up suddenly with vast heat (lviii. 9) and crackling, and directly dies out, leaving no trace.

Ver. 13. "*Thou hast thrust sore at me that I might fall, but the*

*Lord helped me.*" "*Thou.*" Here the whole body of enemies are just as one man. The whole furious swarm is apotrophised as one.

**HOMILETICS:**—The general subject of these words is *Confidence in God*, and the words lead us to look at this *confidence* in two aspects—as justified by experience, and as the inspiration of courage.

I. AS JUSTIFIED BY EXPERIENCE. "*It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes.*" This is the testimony of experience expressed in the verses above. The writer had trusted, and he was not put to shame, he was not confounded. "It is better," says Matthew Henry, "more wise, more comfortable, and more safe, there is more reason for it, and it will speed better, *to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in man, yea, though it be in princes.* He that devotes himself to God's guidance and government, with an entire dependence upon God's wisdom, power, and goodness, has a better security to make him safe, than if all the kings and potentates of the earth should undertake to protect him." *Experience*, or consciousness, which is the most infallible of all tests, the most demonstrative of all evidence, declares that God has never failed to those who have trusted in Him. Here is the testimony of experience, "Ye know in all your hearts, and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof. There failed not aught of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the



house of Israel; all came to pass." "*Better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes,*" says the Psalmist. "The Jews," says Perowne, "had learnt by painful experience, how little they could trust in princes, for the work which had been begun under Cyrus had been threatened under Cambyses, and had been suspended under the pseudo-Smerdis, and it was not till Darius came to the throne that they were allowed to resume it." The other aspect in which these words lead us to look at confidence in God is—

II. As the INSPIRATION OF COURAGE. What courage breathes in these words, "*All nations compass me about, but in the name of the Lord will I destroy them?*" Thrice are these words repeated. True confidence in God will always make a man invincible and fearless. The courage of Moses, Daniel, and the the three Hebrew youths, and Paul, who said, "None of these things move me," all grew out of confidence in God. This was the philosophy of Luther's heroic invincibility. "When he was summoned to attend the Diet at Worms, his friends, notwithstanding the safe-conduct granted by the Emperor, Charles V., apprehending danger to his person, would have dissuaded him from going thither. But Luther replied, 'I am determined to enter the city in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, though as many devils should oppose me as there are tiles upon all the houses at Worms.' He was accompanied from Wurtemberg by some divines, and one hundred horses; but he took only eight horsemen into Worms. When he stepped out of the carriage, he said, in the presence of a great number of persons, 'God shall be on my side.'"

## No. CLXVI.

## God and Man.

"THE LORD IS MY STRENGTH AND SONG, AND IS BECOME MY SALVATION." *Ps.* cxviii. 14-18.

*The Portion Sung on the Way.*

ANNOTATIONS :—Ver. 14. "*The Lord is my strength and song, and is become my salvation.*" "My pride and my song is Jah, and he became my salvation." — *Delitzsch*. This verse is a literal quotation from Exodus xv. 2, and contains the remarkable name, JAH. "The signal miracles of deliverance, whatever they were, recall the miracles of old. All praise (such is the import) be to Jehovah, from whom, in days past, came miraculous, effectual aid, and now comes." — *Canon Cook*.

Ver. 15.—"*The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous.*" "*Rejoicing*," see Ezra vi. 16. "*Tabernacles*." This is not the word used for the temporary tents in which the people lived during the feast of the tabernacles, it rather means "*dwellings*" (*Psalms* lxxviii. 55; xc. 10; cxxxviii. 3).

Ver. 16.—"*The right hand of the Lord.*" "*The right hand*," the chief organ of active power. It is, of course, a metaphor, for God has no organs. This "*right hand*" is magnified also by Moses (*Exodus* xv. 7).

Ver. 17.—"*I shall not die, but live.*" This is the inference he draws from what the Almighty had accomplished on his behalf. It is said that Luther had this verse hung up in his study. The whole Psalm was one of his most favourite Psalms, and this verse his favourite verse. "Though," he says, "I love all the Psalms, yet I delight especially in this, and look upon it as written specially for me; indeed, it has come to my aid again and again, and supported me in heavy trials, when kaiser, king, philosopher, and saint could do naught."

Ver. 18.—"*The Lord hath chastened me sore, but he hath not given me over unto death.*" "Israel had been sorely chastened, and brought to the brink of destruction; but God had not suffered them to fall a prey to death. He had raised them up in order that they might fulfil their high calling by proclaiming His mighty deeds to the world." — *Prebendary Young*. The chastisement was by the Chaldeans.

HOMILETICS: These verses lead us to consider how *God should be realised by every man*, how He is realised by the *righteous*, and what He appears in His *procedure*.

I. HOW GOD SHOULD BE REALISED BY EVERY MAN. What should He be to every man? First: He should be his *strength*. "*The Lord is my strength.*" All the strength we have, physical, intellectual, and moral is *from* God; nay, more, is God's. Were He to withdraw His strength from us we should be motionless and be no more. But to *feel* this, feel that our strength is His, is what we need. Conscious dependence upon His strength is the foundation of piety. "Hold thou me up, and I shall be saved." Secondly: He should be his "*song*:" that is his joy. The source of all his joy and spring of his delights. We should rejoice in God as our Father. Thirdly: He should be his *salvation*. He "*is become my salvation.*" Though national salvation is perhaps here specially referred to and ascribed to God, He is the moral salvation of every true man. He saves from misery by saving from sin.

II. HOW GOD IS ENJOYED BY THE RIGHTEOUS. "*The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous.*" Who is the righteous man? The man who is right in himself and right in relation to God and the universe. First: Such a man has rejoicing. "Being justified," or made right by faith; he has "peace that passeth all understanding." Religion is happiness wherever it exists.

"The sorrows of the mind be banished from this place,  
Religion never was designed to make our pleasures less."

Secondly: Such a man has salvation. "*Rejoicing and*

*salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous.*" A righteous man is saved—saved from sin, and to be saved from sin, is to be saved from all evils of all kinds.

III. HOW GOD APPEARS IN HIS PROCEDURE. First: Courageous. "*The right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly.*" He moves on in the execution of His eternal purposes with absolute fearlessness. Of what can He be afraid, whose will can at any moment create or destroy universes? Secondly: Glorious. "*The right hand of the Lord is exalted.*" That is, praised, honoured, adored. Who that studies His works, whether the minute or the vast can fail to exalt and adore the right hand of the Lord? Thirdly: Restorative. "*I shall not die but live, and declare the works of the Lord. The Lord hath chastened me sore; but he hath not given me over unto death.*" His great purpose in relation to all His operations with man is restoration. The sufferings that He inflicts, or chastisements, the intent of the penalties attached to all His laws is not destruction, but reformation.

CONCLUSION.—Such is the view of God which these verses suggest. Let us feel that He is our strength and our exalted song, that He is to us what He is to the righteous, our rejoicing and our salvation. "We can imagine," says Plumptre on these verses, "with what special force the words would come to those who then were or had been but recently, keeping their feast of tabernacles, and rejoicing in the great deliverance which God had given them."

No. CLXVII.

**The Realm of Righteousness.**

“OPEN TO ME THE GATES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.” *Ps. cxviii. 19, 20.*

*The Portion Sung at their Entrance to the Temple.*

ANNOTATIONS:—Ver. 19. “*Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, and I will praise the Lord.*” Some suppose that “*the gates*” here refer to the gates of Jerusalem, the Holy City, which were just restored (Nehemiah iii. 8), but we think the gates of the temple are specially referred to. The words are supposed to have been sung by the priests and the people as they entered the sacred enclosure.

“*gates of righteousness,*” because the fountain of righteousness was there.” — *Henstenburg*. This is supposed by some to be a response from within the gate to the words in the processional chant to those outside “*Open to me the gates of righteousness,*” and the word from within reply, “*This gate of the Lord.*” “*The righteous*” here refer to the Israelite people, and the gate through which they entered the temple was the east side of the outer vestibule.

Ver. 20.—“*This gate of the Lord into which the righteous shall enter.*” “The gates of the sanctuary were called the

HOMILETICS:—The words are suggestive of the *realm of righteousness*, the sphere where righteousness dwells and reigns, the morally renewed sphere, the new heavens and the new earth. We may consider three things in relation to this realm—

I. A FELT OBSTRUCTION to it. “*Open to me the gates of righteousness.*” Using the words as an illustration of our spiritual condition they may express the fact that the gates of righteousness are closed to us—closed not by God, but closed by ourselves—closed by *ignorance, prejudice, sensuality, worldliness, unbelief, pride*. These shut our souls out from that glorious realm wherein dwelleth righteousness. “And there shall in no wise



enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." Who does not *feel* the obstruction?

II. A DETERMINATION TO ENTER THE realms of righteousness. "*Open to me the gates of righteousness. I will go into them, and I will praise the Lord.*" We can only enter the kingdom of righteousness by an invincible determination. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent taketh it by force." We must fight the fight of faith. We must agonise to enter in. Merely speculative faith will not carry us in, nor formal worship, nor pious sentiment, nor religious profession. We have to wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against powers, principalities and darkness, and crush them on our way to the gates.

III. A WELCOME INTO the realms of righteousness. "*This gate of the Lord into which the righteous shall enter.*" If this response is from within the sacred enclosure it may be taken as a welcome. Spiritually all within the realm of righteousness are ready to welcome us. Saints, angels, Christ—all are ready to welcome us, singing, "*This is the gate of the Lord into which the righteous shall enter.*"

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No. CXLVIII.

**A Blessed Consciousness, a Marvellous Providence, and a Joyous Day.**

"I WILL PRAISE THE LORD," &c. —Ps. cxviii. 20-24.

*The Reception of the Festal Procession.*

ANNOTATIONS: —Ver. 20. "*This gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter.*" We repeat the twentieth verse

here, because it forms part of the response from within the sacred enclosure.

Ver. 22.—"*The stone which the*

*builders rejected is become the head stone of the corner."* "The Stone." "It has been conjectured that there is a reference here to a particular incident occurring at the building of the second temple; a stone which had belonged to the old temple, and which the workmen thought unsuitable for the place where it was being set up, namely, at the corner of the building, was afterwards tried at the request of the priests, and found to be admirably adapted for the purpose. Others see in the rejection or despising of the stone a reference to the feeling of disappointment and despondency which came over many of the elders who were present at the laying of the foundation-stone of the second temple. They could not endure the diminished proportions of the new building, they despised the day of small things. The work of re-building was surrounded with difficulty; it was actually interrupted for a time. But the mountain which had towered to the skies before Zerubbabel had become a plain. The temple now stood completed before them, and Zechariah had brought forth the top or

braystone, amid the rejoicings of the people (Zech. iv. 7-10). In either case, the stone was a type of the people of Israel; they themselves had been in despair, and had forgotten, or disbelieved God's promise. But now He would vindicate His faithfulness, and they were raised to a place of honour and dignity among the nations. And then Israel itself was a type of Him, who though rejected by His own people, was chosen of God and precious, the Corner-stone of the one great living temple of the redeemed, whether Jews or Gentiles (Acts iv. 11; Matt. xxi. 42; 1 Pet. ii. 7; Eph. ii. 20)." — *Commentary on the Old Testament.*

But I am disposed to accept the view of Dr. Alexander, and regard the words as a proverbial expression, and as such applicable in any case, in which what seemed to be contemptible has come to honour. "As this Psalm was sung by the people at the last Jewish festival attended by our Saviour, He applied the proverb to Himself, as one rejected by the Jews and by their rulers. Yet before long recognised as their Messiah, whom they

had denied and murdered, but whom God had exalted as a Prince and a Saviour to great repentance to Israel and remission of sins (Acts v. 31)." *Dr. Alexander.*

Ver. 23.—"*This is the Lord's doing, it is marvellous in our eyes.*" The wonderful revolution which took place in the condition of the Jewish people at this time, their deliverance from Babylon, and their restoration to their own city and temple, was

not the work of man, but God, and was full of the marvellous.

Ver. 24.—"*This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.*" "*This is the day,*" the day when Israel's restoration was complete, and when within the sacred enclosure of the temple, the glory of the country and the restoration is celebrated, the grand festive day of the nation.

HOMILETICS.—In these words we have three things—a blessed consciousness, a marvellous Providence, a joyous day.

I. A BLESSED CONSCIOUSNESS. "*I will praise thee; for Thou hast heard me and become my salvation.*" Here are two things. First: A grateful assurance of answered prayer. "*Thou hast heard me.*" To know that God has heard me, is of all knowledge, the most transporting. Secondly: A grateful assurance of personal salvation. "*Art become my salvation.*" Not *shall* become, or *will* become, but "*art*" become. Salvation is a present blessing. "*This is life eternal,*" &c. The consciousness that I am saved is indeed a blessed consciousness. "*I know in whom I have believed.*"

II. A MARVELLOUS PROVIDENCE. "*The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing, it is marvellous in our eyes.*" What man rejects, God accepts. First: Man rejects insignificant means, with which to accomplish his chief ends. When man has a great plan

to carry out, he looks out for the most gifted, the most mighty and skilful agents. Not so with the Almighty. By whom did He deliver Israel from Egyptian bondage? By Moses a poor Hebrew exile. By whom did He teach the Jewish nation? By prophets, all of whom were poor and insignificant in the estimation of their age. Secondly: Man despises the very agents whom God employs. This was pre-eminently the case with Christ. "He was despised and rejected of men." Yet He was employed in a work of transcendent greatness. Man despised the Apostles, they were accounted the off-scouring of all things. "God hath chosen the weak things of the world," to give power to the mighty, &c. Indeed all His doings in nature, Providence and redemption are marvellous in our eyes.

"Darkness enfolds Thy footway,  
Thy path is in the sea;  
Strive we may through endless day  
In vain to follow Thee."

We have here :

III. A JOYOUS DAY. "*This is the day which the Lord hath made.*" One day is not more divine than another. Its divinity and sacredness are subjective. What is a bright and jubilant day to one soul is often a gloomy and depressing day to another. To the Jews on this occasion, this day on which they celebrated their restoration, was indeed a day to them which the Lord had made, which the Lord had brought about. Often the week days to a man are more Sabbatic than the Sunday, all depends on the state of the soul. Man has to create his own Sabbaths, and when they come to him, he feels the Lord hath made them, and he "*will rejoice and be glad in it.*"

## HOMILETIC GLANCES AT THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN.

[As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form of Sermonic Outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are:—"Introduction to New Testament," by Bleek; "Commentary on John," by Tholuck; "Commentary on John," by Hengstenberg; "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," by Westcott; "The Gospel History," by Ebrard; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon; "St. John's Gospel," by Oosterzee; "Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Dörner, Lange, Sears, Farrer, etc., etc.]

### No. CCXVIII.

#### Christ in Relation to His Disciples in all Future Times.

"NEITHER PRAY I FOR THESE ALONE," &c., John xvii. 20-24.

EXPOSITION: Ver. 20: "*Neither pray I for these alone,*" or, "I ask not for these only." "*But for these also which shall believe on Me.*" "The true reading here is one we should not have expected, "for them which believe on Me," πιστευόντων, not πιστευουσόντων. But the evidence in its favour is decisive, while the received reading has but feeble support. Of course the sense is the same, but this reading exhibits the whole company of believers as already before the eye of Jesus in that character—a present multitude already brought in, and filling His mighty soul with a Redeemer's satisfaction. How

striking is it, that while all future time is here viewed as present, the present is viewed as past and gone."—*Dr. Brown.* "Through their word." Their testimony concerning Him. He had manifested the character of God, and they had believed, and now His disciples must through all times bear witness to the same ideal.

Ver. 21: "*That they all may be one as Thou, Father, art* (art is not in the original,) *in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us.*" Not theologically or ecclesiastically one, but morally one, one in master-purpose, and supreme desire. "The



design," says Lange, "is triply intensified: (1) all one; (2) one as we; (3) one in us." Here is the unity of the Father and the Son. "*As Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee.*" The union of all disciples into that unity, "*that they also may be one in us,*" and the union of the disciples amongst themselves, "*that they may be one.*" "*That the world may believe that Thou hast (didst) sent me.*" Such a unity would carry the conviction to the outlying world of the divinity of Christ's mission.

Ver. 22: "*And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them,*" &c. For remarks on this verse see previous article.

Ver. 23: "*I in them and Thou in Me, that they might be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that Thou hast (didst) sent Me, and hast loved them as (even as) Thou hast loved Me.*" All but the last clause of this verse is a repetition of preceding utterances. This cannot mean that exactly the same affection as the Eternal had for the Son He had for the disciples. But rather that as truly as He loves His Son, so does He love His disciples.

Ver. 24: "*Father, I will.*" *Θέλω*

This does not seem to be so much the language of determination as purpose. "*That they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am.*" In chapter xiv. 3, He had assured His disciples that they should be with Him. He said, "I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." "*Where I am.*" I shall be somewhere, I shall not cease to be, and I will that they shall be with Me. "*That they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me.*"

The glory, *δόξα*, of a moral being, as we have said, is excellence or goodness. It is in God as its Source, in Christ as its Medium, in His disciples as its recipients and reflectors. To desire men to behold this glory, has nothing of vanity in it, it is a pious desire that all men should adore God, the Eternal Source. A man whose only glory, such as it is, is in some material, social, or mental distinction, is often inspired by vanity to request men to come and behold his glory. But where there is true glory no such a desire could exist, the *ego* is lost in the infinitude of goodness.

HOMILETICS:—The words lead us to look at *Christ in relation to His disciples in all future times*. Observe:—

I. HIS REALISATION OF THEIR ACTUAL EXISTENCE. The only disciples living were the eleven, but He prays for them which shall hereafter “*believe*” on Him “*through their word*.” How many have believed “*through their word*” during the last 1800 years, and how many more will believe before humanity shall cease on earth! It will verily be “a great multitude which no man can number.” And yet all these seem present to Christ at this moment, they come within the range of His far-reaching vision, His great soul realised each in his distinctive personality, and for them He prays. To a soul in vital fellowship with God, and inspired with the Spirit of Omniscience, time and space are of little account. The old Hebrew seers threw their glance far away into the distant centuries, and had a glimpse of generations and kingdoms yet to come, but none of them saw the future so clearly and realistically as did the Son of God, the incarnate *Logos*. A Being who thus knows the future can never be disappointed, He will have all His purposes realised, and He is now “sitting down in the heavens expecting His enemies be made His footstool.” In relation to His disciples in all future times, observe—

II. HIS METHOD OF CALLING THEM INTO HIS SCHOOL. “*Believe on Me through their word*.” First: They must “*believe on Me*.” Not on what men say about Me, not on priesthoods, but on Me, the living, loving, Son of God, and the Redeemer of the world. This is the way of becoming a disciple, there is no other way; it has ever been so, it is so now, and will continue to be till the end. “He is the way, the truth, and the

life." Secondly: They must "*believe on Me through their word.*" That is their testimony of Him. By their word, which is the word of inspired truth, He will be made known to men. It is a witnessing word. How can they believe on Him whom they have not heard, and how can they hear without a preacher, and how can they preach unless they be sent? This is the method. Do not expect any other. Observe, in relation to His disciples of the future—

III. HIS SUPREME DESIRE THAT THEY SHOULD BE UNITED ON EARTH AND DWELL WITH HIM IN HEAVEN. First: That they should be *united on earth*. "*That they may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me.*" Observe: (1) The nature of this unity. (a) It is a unity that is very vital. One living in another. "*I in them and Thou in Me, and that they also may be one in us.*" There is nothing mysterious or uncommon in the idea of one soul living in another. The object we love most, without figure, lives in us, not as a mere form, but as a living force; friend lives in friend, the parent lives in the loving child—love brings the distant object near, bears it over oceans, and often from the other world, and enshrines it in the heart. Thus, those who love Christ have Christ in them, and those whom Christ loves are in Him, and as Christ and His disciples both love the Infinite Father He is in them, and He loves them that are in Him. (β) It is a unity of the Infinite with the finite, of the Creator and the creature. As attraction links the smallest atom to the highest orb of immensity, love links the humblest disciples to the great heart of the Infinite, and He to them. Observe: (2) A reason for this unity. "*That the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.*" No argument could be formulated by

all the logicians in the universe to convince the world of the divinity of our Saviour's mission, so mighty as a thorough union of soul in all the professed disciples of Christ. Unphilosophic religionists have endeavoured to create a doctrinal unity. This is impossible. But could it be done, it would be highly mischievous to souls. They have sought, too, and to some extent succeeded, in creating ecclesiastical unity, which is a huge imposture, and a terrible bane. Hence various denominations and churches, and sects universal, that put professed disciples in antagonism one with another, and thus create a universal scepticism. The union wanted, and the only real union that can exist is a moral union, a union in purpose, sympathy, and inspiration. This is the union to convert the world. Christ's supreme desire is—Secondly : That they should dwell with *Him in heaven*. “*Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am : that they may behold My glory which thou hast given Me, for Thou lovedst me before the foundations of the world.*” (1) With Me in person as well as in sympathy. With Me as disciples, as friends, as brethren. (2) With Me, to “*behold My glory.*” That they may see Me as I am. My glory is the glory that Thou hast given Me ; it is a gift and a reflection of Thyself. Thou hast given it Me, “*for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world.*” The world had a foundation. Christ was before all worlds, and before all worlds the Father loved Him. “He was in the beginning with God,” the “first-born of every creature.” Who does not exclaim—

“ Let me be with Thee where Thou art,  
 My Saviour, My eternal rest,  
 Then only with this longing heart,  
 Be fully and for ever blest.”

## Sermonic Saplings.

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### A SONG OF DEGREES (9) THE BLESSED TENDENCY OF TRUE PIETY.

“BLESSED IS EVERY ONE THAT FEARETH THE LORD, THAT  
WALKETH IN HIS WAYS,” &c.—*Ps. cxxviii. 1-6.*



HY Luther should regard this Psalm as especially suitable for a marriage song, and the Church of England should use it as such, I know not. It is a song suited for all seasons. The author is unknown, and its date in all probability was the period when the dangers immediately associated with the return of the Hebrews from Babylon began to diminish.

The great subject is *the blessed tendency of true piety*, and the truly pious man is described as one that “*feareth the Lord*” and “*walketh in His ways.*” Herein you have the principle and the development of genuine religion. Its *principle* is *fear*; which does not mean a servile, craven emotion, but a loving reverence. It is the fear of a son who so loves and honours his father that he is afraid of offending him. Here, too, we have its *development*—“*that walketh in his ways.*” The principle is not a dormant element, nor a passing impulse, that goes off in talk or spasmodic effort, but the mainspring of all activity, and the activity evermore in harmony with the moral laws of God. He “*walketh in his ways.*”

Now what is the tendency of this piety as indicated in this poem?



I. Its tendency is to make BUSINESS PROSPEROUS. “*For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands : happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.*” This stands in splendid contrast to the terrible threat which Moses addressed to the Israelites of old, should they break God’s law. (See Exod. xxv. 35, Deut. xviii. 40). Three classes of men are here suggested to our minds. First: Those who do not labour, and consequently produce nothing. Those are a curse, a curse to *society*, they are social locusts devouring the fruits of the earth, bloated voluptuaries, haughty oppressors, fattening on the muscles and blood of the toiling millions. Secondly: Those who labour, but cannot enjoy, the produce of their labour. This arises either from the fault of *others* or their own. Wars, crushing taxations, and social chicaneries, often rob industrious men of the fruits of their labour, so that however much they toil from year to year, they are always indigent, and half-starved ; they have no happiness in the results of their arduous and unremitting endeavours. Sometimes it arises from their *own* fault. Their hearts are not right, they burn with avarice, and are the victims of jealousies and envies, and a thousand harrassing cares. He only can enjoy the fruits of his labour whose faith is set on God, and who is inspired with supreme sympathy for the Supremely Good, who labours not to “lay up treasures on earth,” but treasures in heaven. Thirdly: Those who labour, and are thoroughly happy in their labour. Such are the genuinely pious. To such the Psalm points, “*Thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands : happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.*” Such a man is “blessed in his deeds,” he is “satisfied from himself.” He has joy in himself alone, he beats

fresh music into his soul with every fresh effort. "Godliness is profitable unto all things," &c.

II. Its tendency is to make the FAMILY HAPPY. "*Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about the table.*" Piety tends to make the wife a vine, not a briar, a thorn, or a upas: but a vine, the most pure and beautiful of plants. "Travellers speak with rapture of the appearance of vines, with their swelling bunches of grapes, before the season of vintage. And who that has once seen it, can ever forget that magnificent vine at Hampton Court, which covers a space of more than two thousand square feet!" "*Thy children like olive plants round thy table.*" The olive tree is *beautiful, precious, enduring*. Genuine piety tends to make such a family, such a mother, such children, such a father, such a happy circle. Ungodly families are stars wandering from their orbits, but a truly pious family, small though it be, is an orb rolling round the eternal Sun of Righteousness, and from it deriving its life, its light, and its harmony.

III. Its tendency is to make the COUNTRY BLESSED. "*Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord. The Lord shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life.*" Yes, the "good of Jerusalem," the good of the country, of a nation is only ensured by piety. "Righteousness exalteth a nation." It exalts a nation in many ways. In *material wealth*. Truth, honesty, integrity, in a people, are the best guarantees of commercial advancement. Credit is the best capital in the business of a nation as well as in the business of an individual, and credit is built on righteous principles. The more

credit a nation has, the more business it can do; and the more business, if rightly conducted, the more will be the accumulation of wealth. "Righteousness exalteth a nation" in *social enjoyments*. According as the principles of veracity, uprightness, and honour, reign in society, will be the freeness, the heartiness, and the enjoyment of social intercourse. It exalts a nation in *moral power*. The true majesty of a kingdom lies in its moral virtues. The state whose heart beats loyally to the eternal principles of rectitude gains an influence upon the earth mightier than the mightiest armies or battalions can impart.

IV. Its tendency is to make the LIFE LONG. "*Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel.*" Length of days was a well known indication of God's favour under the old covenant. There should be a full stop after the word "*Children,*" and the word "*and*" is not in the original. Genuine piety tends to long life. Four facts will show this. First: That long life *depends upon obedience to the laws of our constitution*, physical, mental, and moral laws. Secondly: In order to obey the laws of our constitution, *those laws must be understood*. Brutes obey the laws of their nature without understanding them; they do it by instinct, but man's instinct, in consequence of the complicatedness of his nature, is insufficient for the purpose. He must, by a broad and just induction of facts, ascertain them. Thirdly: In order to understand those laws, *man must study them*. They will not come to him by intuition, inspiration, or revelation. He must study them, study nature. Fourthly: In order to study them effectively *he must have supreme sympathy with their Author*. All the purposes, inven-

tions, achievements, of one whom we greatly love have such a charm for us that we delight to study them. Apply this to God. This supreme sympathy with the great Legislator of the universe is genuine piety, hence genuine piety insures long life.

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## A SONG OF DEGREES (10) THE PERSECUTED CONDITION OF GODLY MEN ON THIS EARTH.

“MANY A TIME HAVE THEY AFFLICTED ME FROM MY YOUTH,”  
&c. *Psalms* cxxix. 1-8.



THE supposition that this Psalm was composed soon after the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, is the most generally accepted theory, and is as likely to be correct as any other. However times, seasons, and localities affect not truths that are universal and immutable. The Psalm may be fairly used to illustrate the *persecuted condition of godly men on this earth*. We have them here—

I. AS SUFFERING UNDER THE HAND OF WICKED PERSECUTION. The persecution here referred to First: Was of early commencement. “*Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say many a time have they afflicted me from my youth.*” The words literally apply to the children of Abraham in their collective capacity. They were young in Egypt, so they are often represented as children, there the nation grew until it reached that strength that enabled it under God to throw off the yoke of its oppressors, and to go out in the world and work for itself. Here in its youthhood it was greatly

*“afflicted.”* It is ever so, the persecutions of godly men begin in this life in the very youthhood of their religion. The moral principles that have come into them, the spirit that has taken possession of them, and the purposes they have adopted, stand in direct antagonism to all the maxims, the pleasures, and pursuits of the wicked world. The persecution here referred to Secondly: Was frequent in its occurrence. *“Many a time.” “Many a time;”* not only whilst in Egyptian oppression, but in their travels in the wilderness, in their struggles after they entered the Promised Land. The persecution here referred to Thirdly: *Was violent in its character.* *“The plowers plowed upon my back, they made long their furrows.”* “A somewhat similar image,” says Canon Cooke, “occurs in Is. li. 23. The lashes inflicted upon the back of the writhing slave by a cruel master are compared to the long furrows pierced in the passive earth by the share of the plougher” (See Mic. iii. 12). The victims of persecution are here compared to a field, pierced, and turned up like the furrows made by a plough. (1) This language finds its application in Christ. In the mouth of Christ this language has a sublime significance. *“Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth.”* When an infant in His mother’s arms, He was borne by his affrighted parents into Egypt, Herod aimed at His death when a helpless babe; through all the stages of His after life He was a “Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief.” Who can think of the calumnies directed against His reputation, His desertion by His professed friends, the furious rage of the rabble, the coarse insults of His so-called judges, the ruthless treatment of the Roman ruffians, and His agonies on the cross, without feeling with what



truthfulness Christ might apply this language, "*Many a time have they afflicted Me !*" (2) This language finds its application in the history of His Church. Who can read the history of the Church from apostolic times down through the dark ages, and even to the present hour in some parts of the world without feeling how truthfully they can say, "*Many a time have they afflicted me.*" We have godly men here :—

II. AS ENGAGING THE MERCIFUL INTERPOSITION OF HEAVEN. "*The Lord is righteous. He hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked.*" First : He is engaged in sustaining them. "*Yet they have not prevailed against me.*" The bush burned on, but was not consumed. The branches were torn up, but the roots struck deeper. Not all the enemies of Christ "*prevailed*" against Him. He triumphed. Not all the enemies of His Church have "*prevailed*" against it, it has shone in the hemisphere of human history, like a star amidst all the tempests, convulsions, and storms of the world. Heaven always sustains the good. Secondly : He is engaged in delivering them. "*The Lord is righteous, He hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked.*" The plough is fastened by "*cords*" to the yoke of the oxen, and they draw its tearing iron through the ground. If you would stop the plough you must cut the "*cords.*" This is the figure, God in righteousness will one day stop the plough of persecution, He will deliver His people out of all their troubles. We have godly men here—

III. AS RISING TRIUMPHANTLY OVER ALL THEIR ENEMIES. "*Let them all be confounded and turned back that hate Zion,*" &c. "These verses," says Canon Cook, "contain a prophecy rather than a wish or a prayer. All the enemies of Zion, the seat of Jehovah, out of which He

sends blessings upon His chosen, shall be put to shame and driven back, *i.e.*, with shame and confusion from their enterprise against Zion. They shall be as "*grass upon the housetops*," that is not gathered or garnered : that stirs up no cry, in mower or in passer-by, of joy and thankfulness : but withers before it comes to maturity, or produces flowers, unblest and blasted (Isa. xxxvii. 27 ; 2 Kings xix. 26)." We are here taught that the persecutors will be utterly routed, driven back with burning shame, with panic dread. This was the case with Pharaoh, Sennacherib, with Haman, Herod ; aye, with persecutors in every age. "I will break your church in pieces with a hammer, if you do not obey me," said a French monarch to a Protestant pastor. Calm and dignified was the reply : "This anvil has broken many a hammer."

A comparison is suggested in the last verses between the prosperity of the persecutors and that of their Godly victims. (1) The prosperity of the one is *evanescent*, that of the other is permanent. It is like the "*grass upon the housetops which withereth afore it groweth up*." From the flat roofs of Eastern houses there often springs a kind of vegetation here called grass. The roofs being cemented, affords the seed but the smallest nourishment and moisture, it soon shrivels up and dies. Such is the prosperity of the wicked, it is not like a strong tree in the forest, nor even like grass in good soil and site. Not ever so with the prosperity of the godly. "The righteous are like a tree planted by the rivers of water." (2) The prosperity of the one is *worthless*, that of the other is *beneficent*. "*Wherewith the mower filleth not his hand : nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom*." "This is the picture of a har-

vest field. The reaper fills his left hand with the yellow corn before he thrusts in his sickle to cut it down. A gleaner is behind him, in accordance with the benevolent feeling of the Mosaic dispensation to the poor; he is gathering handfuls (not binding sheaves) and placing them in his bosom—that is, in the fold of his loose garment. The reverse of this is the prosperity of the wicked. When the reaper goes out into the field in the season of harvest there is not enough grain to fill his hand with. When the gleaner goes out, there is nothing to fill his lap with. The crop is utterly worthless, it is worth no man's cutting down; it is worth no man's labour. It is quite useless, and no one is the better for it. The harvest is usually a period of abundance and satisfaction. But to the wicked, it is attended with disappointment and misery. 'The harvest shall be a heap in the day of grief and desperate sorrow.' ”—*Dr. MacMichael*. (3) The prosperity of the one is *uncongratulated*, that of the other is *blest*. “*Neither do they which go by say, the blessing of the Lord be upon you: we bless you in the name of the Lord.*” The allusion here is to the Jewish custom as seen in the history of Ruth. Boaz came from Bethlehem and said unto the reapers, “The Lord be with thee, and they answered him, The Lord bless thee.” It is impossible to pray for the prosperity of the wicked, or to exult in it. It answers no useful purpose, it is a curse to the owner, and of no service to others.

CONCLUSION.—Let not the conduct of persecutors depress us. If we were of the world the world would love its own. If we saw things as they really are, and as we shall see them ere long, we should endorse the words of the Great Teacher, “Blessed are ye when men persecute you.”

## A TIME OF MUCH RAIN.

“IT IS A TIME OF MUCH RAIN.” EZRA x. 13.



O said the Hebrews in Jerusalem upwards of 2300 years ago, and what was said there and then may be said with still greater emphasis here in England to-day. The last two years are the wettest years of which there is any account in the history of our country. The rain to which the text refers fell, it is supposed, in December, the coldest, and most rainy month in Palestine. It came at an important juncture, when work requiring fine weather had to be done. Ezra, priest and scribe, has arrived in Jerusalem. He has come full of patriotism, clothed with authority, with vast treasures for the temple from the Persian Court. He has come fired with zeal for the honour of God, determined to do his utmost for the restoration of city, temple, and reformation of life. He is true to his name. Ezra means helper, and a great helper he was. The second temple had been built sixty-eight years ere his arrival, but it was inferior in several respects to that of Solomon. It wanted the sacred fire, the ark of the covenant, the mercy seat, the shekinah, the manna, and most probably the urim and thummin. Ezra, after a journey of four months, reaches Jerusalem, accompanied by a band of voluntary emigrants. He soon learns that the people need something more important than gold and silver, or a magnificent temple and ritualism. Their morals had been corrupted, their temptations to idolatry were becoming increasingly great through their marriage alliances with the heathen. In view of this

state of things the anguish and the prayers of Ezra were most intense. He "rent his clothes and his mantle, plucked off the hair of his head and beard, and sat down astonished." He saw that the nation was on the brink of ruin, that nothing short of a thorough moral reformation could save it. His devout spirit became magnetic. Hundreds flocked around him filled with deepest emotion. Conscious of their guilt, they wept aloud, and promised to support him in his endeavours to rectify the evils of the hour. A convocation was summoned, when it was resolved that there should be a dissolution of all marriage relations that were contrary to the law of the land; but so heavy was the rain that fell, that the people trembled with fear, as though the judgment of a second flood had broken in upon them on account of their sins.

The work of investigating the extent of the trespasses seemed likely to be protracted to a period most inconvenient to those who were away from their homes and exposed to such weather. Ezra, therefore, with a few of the chief of the fathers, was appointed to see that the resolution was carried into effect. They accomplished their task in three months, although "it was a time of much rain."

Israel could not forget that rain, nor will the rain of the present year\* be easily forgotten. Many are looking at in the light of science, that is quite right. Some are looking at it in the light of agriculture, that is quite right. Others are looking at it in the light of commerce, that also is quite right; but let us look at it in the highest light of all, the light of Revelation.

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\* This discourse was delivered in 1880, a year of "much rain."



There is a divine meaning in all things. Every drop of rain is full of God's purpose. I offer three remarks with regard to "a time of much rain."

I. A TIME OF MUCH RAIN TEACHES US OUR DEPENDENCE. Man's great sin is his wish to live independently of the Almighty. It was the sin of our first parents, when they wanted to be as Gods. "Who is the Lord that I should obey His voice?" asked Pharaoh, and this is the question of millions to-day.

When everything goes on smoothly, when the sun of prosperity shines, and not a cloud lines the heavens, we are liable to become proud and self-sufficient, as though life and all its affairs were in our own hands; but when trials come, when brightest hopes are blasted, when the present is dark, and the future seems still darker, then, convinced of our helplessness, we awake to the fact that "the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof, the world, and they that dwell therein," and that "In Him we live, and move, and have our being."

A time of much rain teaches us this fact in a very practical way. It shows us there can be no harvests unless God permit. The farmer may plough and sow, his land may be most fertile, the seed of the best kind, cultivation perfect; but if God forbid His sun from shining, and command the clouds to pour down an over abundance of rain, day by day, for months, the hopes of harvest will be blasted.

Science may pierce through mountains, dive into the depths of the sea, construct its balloons, and soar right up into the air, it may even weigh and measure the worlds of space, but science has no control over the sun, it cannot scatter a single cloud in the sky. God holds the key of every cloud in His own hand.

A time of great rain reminds us that our commerce as well as our harvests is at the divine disposal. Some who have given considerable attention to the present commercial depression tell us that one of its chief causes is a succession of harvests below the average ; be it so or not, one thing is certain, a bad harvest cannot fail to lessen the wealth of a country, and seriously affect its merchandise.

It is estimated that there will be a loss on the present harvest of £60,000,000.

A time of much rain shows our dependence in many ways. You need change of air, and set out on a journey, but the benefit you seek depends on the weather which God will give ; or you resolve to go to a distant town for the transaction of important business, you appoint the hour when you will be there to meet a person concerned in the transaction. But if it please God that at that very time there shall be much rain, your friend may fail to come, your plans may miscarry, your health may suffer, and your life may be imperilled through the inclemency of the weather. “Go to now ye that say,” &c.

The law of dependence is stamped on all things. Every atom is dependent on atom, man on man, nation on nation, world on world, and all are dependent on God.

This time of much rain, when our harvest will be very much below the average, makes us feel, as Englishmen, that we are exceedingly dependent on other nations. What a dismal future would be before England to-day if she could not draw supplies of corn from foreign markets. If men duly remembered this dependence on each other, we should hear less of “wars, and the

rumours of wars." The kindest relations would exist between men everywhere. All would feel that as each member of the human body is vitally related to every other member, so is every man to the human family as a whole. The chain of good will would encircle the globe, and bind men everywhere in the bonds of holy brotherhood. The next remark I have to make is :

II. THAT A TIME OF MUCH RAIN IS VERY TRYING. In some cases it is trying to patience. People are, in the main, far more cheerful and patient in fair weather than in foul. Statistics show, I believe, that more suicides take place in wet and gloomy seasons of the year, than in the dry and sunny.

Men form plans which they resolve speedily to carry out, but a time of much rain sets in, the realisation of their wishes is prevented, and forgetting that the clouds and the sun are alike under the control of infinite wisdom they grow impatient. We sometimes wonder at the impatience of Israel in the wilderness. Marvellous the divine favours granted them, but every now and then their purposes were crossed, and they burst forth into open murmuring that exposed them to the judgments of heaven. After all they were not so unlike ourselves. Though no Red Sea has been divided for our escape from danger, still God has led us in safety through floods in which the strong and the mighty have been overwhelmed. Though no manna has fallen around our abode, no Horeb has sent forth its miraculous streams ; still our bread and our water have been sure. Though no pillar of cloud has gone before us by day, nor a pillar of fire by night, still the Lord has gone before us every step of our wilderness march. Had we met with no trials we should be tempted to regard ourselves as

exceedingly patient; but trials have come to us, and not the least of trials to millions is this time of much rain.

How have we stood the trial? Has our patience failed? Have we murmured? Have we said, this is not right? A season so wet is not what we want, it is not what we have a right to expect; the ways of the Lord are not just. If so we have forgotten that the spiritual life requires trial. A flower may come to perfection in one summer, but the tree, that is to bear fruit, requires not only the summer's sun, but the rain and the storms of many a winter.

A time of much rain is trying not only to patience, but also to faith. It tried the faith of the Hebrews in the time of Ezra. It led to a temporary loss of confidence in the goodness of God, for they trembled thinking that the rain was a sign of His displeasure. But the faith of some people seems to be tried in relation to the divine justice as well as goodness. Nay, they are tempted to question the very existence of God, and to regard the world as an orphan, abandoned to fate or stern law, they see this great machine of Nature with its mighty wheels of solar systems, but see not this *personality* that lives behind and through the whole. What a reproof does the wise economy of Nature, under which rain descends, minister to such unbelief. But for the water that rises from the sea in clouds, and falls in showers on the earth, vegetable, animal, and human life could not exist. It is wisely ordained, that in an island like ours, that is becoming so thickly peopled, and the large towns of which require at times more than an ordinary cleansing, that the average fall of rain should be maintained, not year by year, but by the over-

plus of one period making up for the deficiency of another.

The overplus of this year has washed away, with an irresistible force, the seeds of disease and pestilence, that could not be removed by an ordinary year's rain.

The low rates of mortality in our large towns at the present juncture is a proof of this.

The year 1860 was extraordinarily wet. I well remember that there was but one fine week from April to the end of the summer. People's faith in Divine arrangement was severely taxed. But it was found that the health of our population was signally good throughout that year. The rain was in all probability a preventative against the return of cholera. Have faith in God. We may safely say that the rains of the present year have cleansed our atmosphere, washed our large towns, and removed the seeds of pestilence from man and beast far beyond what could have been accomplished by the ordinary rains of any of its predecessors.

Sir Charles Lyell was on the continent when he said to a gentleman sitting next him at table, "I fear the rains have been doing a great deal of mischief," "I should think," replied his companion, "they were much needed to replenish the springs after this year of drought." "I immediately felt," says Sir Charles Lyell, "I had made an idle and a thoughtless speech." The result of observations shows, that in proceeding from the equator towards the North Pole, there is a diminution in the mean annual quantities of rain. What wisdom! Rain falls most abundantly where there is the greatest heat and need of it. Then we know that mountains attract the clouds, and have a larger share of rain than low lands.



Here, too, is wisdom ; for the mountains contain the springs and reservoirs from which streams run down to bless the plains below.

Let not rain drops, intended as a blessing, rob us of our faith in the wise and loving control of God. There is not a drop that falls without His sanction. It is " He who maketh the sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." I observe—

III. THAT A TIME OF MUCH RAIN SHOULD LEAD TO PRAYER. "Prayer! Prayer! Why you have just said that a time of great rain is beneficial to a nation's health, and that rain falls in accordance with a wise economy." True, and yet I maintain that there may be not only reasons, but very strong reasons, for special prayer at a time of much rain.

Whilst a time of much rain is beneficial to a nation's health, it may prove very detrimental to a nation's crops. Is there not scope for prayer here? May we not in the spirit of submission ask God to so order the rain, if it be His will, that the promise of seed time, and harvest time, shall not fail us any more than the people of other climes?

Whatever certain sages may say against the propriety of prayer for temporal blessings, there is in human nature an instinct that bids it ask for the Divine interposition in all seasons of distress. Surely, prayer in relation to rain is as reasonable to-day as when Elijah prayed that there might be no rain ; "and it rained not on the earth for the space of three years and six months ; and he prayed again, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit."

The rain necessary for the health of England, the

Lord can send when He pleases. He can, in answer to prayer, disperse the clouds till the fruit of the earth has been gathered. And may not an overplus of rain be thus as much intended for our spiritual as our bodily health by awakening within us a sense of dependence and the spirit of prayer? It is not for us to prescribe to God and say this or that is or that is the time when the clouds must be scattered and the sun shine. It will go all wrong with the world unless our wishes are granted. No, we must go to Him humbly, and submit our case, saying, even so Father, if it be Thy will—Thou knowest what is best. My times are in Thy hands.

I have said that a time of much rain is trying to patience. What an argument for prayer here! How ought we to pray to be kept from the spirit of murmuring that charges God with folly, and ask that our patience may be cultivated by our trials.

I have said that a time of much rain is trying to faith; and, if so, now ought we not to pray that our faith fail not?

The apostles approached the Lord, on one occasion when great duties were set before them, and said, "Lord increase our faith." And if we feel unstrung for duty in a time of great rain, *we* should also go to Him, and say, "Lord increase *our* faith."

*Harrogate.*

F. FOX THOMAS.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF RAIN.—"Air condenses as it cools, and, like a sponge filled with water and compressed, pours out the water which its diminished capacity cannot hold. How singular, yet how simple, the philosophy of rain! Who but Omniscience could have devised such an admirable arrangement for watering the earth?"—DR. URE.

## *Germes of Thought.*

### THE PREACHER'S FINGER-POST.

#### The Genius of Moral Evil.

“THEN HE SAITH I WILL RETURN UNTO MY HOUSE.” *Matt.* xii. 44.

A MINUTE and full explanation of the whole context will be found in my “*Genius of the Gospel.*” We detach these words in order briefly to indicate the *Genius of Moral Evil*, or the “spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience.” Metaphorically, the Heavenly Teacher here represents this spirit as speaking of man as his “house,” and as determining after eviction to return to it. Herein observe—

I.—AMAZING AUDACITY.  
“*My house!*” On this round earth there is nothing so great as man, he

is the highest workmanship, the brightest manifestation, and the most responsible agent of heaven. Yet the devil calls him his. “*My house.*” Evil is always *audacious*. Wicked men everywhere manifest a disposition to arrogate to themselves all that is great and valuable: it is all “*mine.*” They call their lands “after their own name.” *My kingdom, my estate, my church, &c., &c.* Audacity this, simply because evil has nothing, it lives on suffrage. Wherever you see arrogance—and alas, you see it everywhere amongst the herds of ungodly men, especially in the higher social

grades—you see the red glare of the devil. Observe here—

II.—UNSCRUPULOUS DISHONESTY. “My house.” (1.) Not a *particle of its materials* belong to him, Not a stone; nay, not an atom in the building. (2.) Not an *effort in its workmanship* was his. He did nothing in its building. Man is God’s property, absolutely, indefeasibly, and for ever. Yet this fiend calls him *his*. Do you not see wicked men everywhere claiming what does not belong to them? They claim the land—they have no moral right to it, for the “earth is the Lord’s, and He hath given it to the children of men.” They claim their own existence, and even that does not belong to them, they are its trustees, not its owners. “All souls are mine,” says God. Wherever you see dishonesty, and is it not in every market, temple,

profession, trade, and social circle?—you see the devil. Observe here—

III.—INTENSE SELFISHNESS. Why does he return to his house? Not for the good of his house, but exclusively for his own benefit. He had been “walking through dry places, seeking rest and finding none.” Selfishness is the essence of sin, it is the root of all its branches, the fountain of all its streams, the spring of all its acts. The devil does not care what injury he does to the house. How foul and loathsome he will make every part, how he will injure all its materials, and turn the very temple of God into the habitation of every fiendish passion. *Self* is everything to wickedness. If the ship will bring wealth to the owner, what matters it although it become a coffin for all on board? If war will bring wealth to

the trader, fame to the soldier, and aggrandisement to the monarch, what matters it though oceans be dyed with blood and continents be strewn with the slain? Observe here—

IV.—EGREGIOUS FOLLY. He returns to his house, but his possession is very precarious, and necessarily terminable. The stronger man, the real owner, will one day evict him, and destroy the

works of the devil. In the end he will find that it had been far better for him if he had kept prowling through the “dry places” of immensity, than to have entered into this house. From this house he must be hurled headlong. “I beheld Satan falling as lightning from heaven.” Sin is folly: by a necessity of nature it frustrates its own ends, and disappoints its own hopes.

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### Looking at Christ the way to believe in Him.

“AND WHEN THE CENTURION WHICH STOOD OVER AGAINST HIM SAW THAT HE SO CRIED OUT, AND GAVE UP THE GHOST, HE SAID TRULY THIS MAN WAS THE SON OF GOD.” *Mark* xv. 39.

THE sight of Christ by the Centurion (and Matthew says also by those who were with him), carried the conviction that He was the Son of God—a Divine Man; and this

suggests to me *that the sight of Christ Himself is the proof of the divinity* of His religion. We can only get a true conviction of the Divinity of His nature, character, and mission, as we look at Him. He Himself is the proof. The most able and learned apologists may collect a variety of



evidence, and bring it into the most logical order and force, but their work would be utterly worthless unless Christ Himself is exhibited. The argument from prophecy of itself has never carried conviction, and is less able to do so to-day than ever. Nor has the argument from miracles been sufficient. Unless it could be proved that no being but God could perform what we call a miracle, and that He would never perform a miracle only in favour of truth—neither of which propositions can be demonstrated—miracles have no convincing force. Thank God we want no proof but the manifestation of Christ. “Now we believe, not because of thy saying, but we have heard Him ourselves.”

I. The VERY EXISTENCE of His character demonstrates the divinity of His religion. Look at His

character as portrayed in His four biographers, and as you look at it a two-fold conviction will be forced upon you.

First: That it is a *supernatural production*. As in the material world, existing things are evolutions from the pre-existing, so in the moral. The moral character of one generation, as a law, grows out of the character of the preceding. To this the character of Christ was a signal exception. There was nothing in the characters of the men who preceded Him from which such a character as His could be evolved. There was nothing either in the Jewish or pagan mind, or both combined, to produce a character like His. The hero of fiction is organised, so to speak, out of elements existing in the mind of the author, but in what mind, in any age or land, are to be found the fundamental

elements of Christ's character? "What manner of man is this?" His character is not *fiction*. There is no mind to create such a fiction, His character is historic *fact*, of which God Himself is the Author. You might as well attempt to convince me that the mystic pillar that guided the children of Israel through the wilderness for forty years, grew out of the Arabian sand, as that the character of Christ grew out of the human mind. Look at it, and you will say with the Centurion, "Truly, this man is the Son of God."

Secondly: Though a supernatural production, it is *human*. By this I mean, the character is that which belongs to human nature, which human nature must have in order to be perfectly developed. Human nature, alas, lost it in the fall, and has been hungering for it ever since, it is its

supreme want, the very bread of its life. Of no other character can we say this, no other character fits human nature, this is its all-satisfying, all-filling ideal, the *summum bonum*. Who, then, can look at His character as a super-human production, yet thoroughly human, without saying, "Truly, this Man is the Son of God?"

II.—The MIGHTY INFLUENCE of His character demonstrates the divinity of His religion. Taking all things into account no character in history has exerted such an influence as the character of Christ. It has created Christendom such as it is, and Christendom is destined in the very tendency of things to become the all dominant, and all formulating power of the whole race. This son of a poor Jewish peasant, in *three* years generated, so to speak, this mighty, moral

force that has given Him "a name above every name," a name before which, one day, "every knee shall bow," and to which "every tongue shall confess." What are the names of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, or any of the old philosophers, the names of Confucius, Buddha, Zoroaster, or any of the founders of the religions of the world, to the name of Christ? Before that name they pale into dimness. Who can look at Him in history, then, without exclaiming with the

Centurion, "Truly this Man is the Son of God?"

CONCLUSION.—Brothers, if your aim is to get your fellow-men to believe in Christ, your method is clear and simple. You need not spend your powers and time in dealing with what are called "*evidences*." You have to manifest Christ, manifestly set Him forth in all His spotless purity, invincible rectitude, unconquerable love and unique moral majesty, and you will carry Him into their convictions.

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### Manly Strength rising with Conscious Weakness.

"WHEN I AM WEAK THEN AM I STRONG." 2 Cor. xii. 10.

Paul's experience under affliction was strange and sublime :—Strange for few possess it, sublime for nothing higher can man desiderate. He says, "I take pleasure in in-

firmities." Most men *murmur* under "infirmities." The number are few who will even submit, but rare in truth are those who "take pleasure in infirmities." Paul seems to have had the philosopher's fabled

stone that turns everything into gold. Look at Paul's "infirmities" as catalogued in the preceding verses. The text is a paradox, a startling one, too, one that on the principle of common experience is a glaring contradiction. Albeit, one that on the principle of Christly experience embodies a glorious truth. In the moral realm man ascends by descending, man conquers by yielding, man saves his life by losing it, man gets might by losing his strength.

I. A good man in weakness becomes "strong" in the SYMPATHY OF OTHERS. Of all the members, of a large family who has most of the sympathies of the family? Not the strong in health, the successful in plan, the buoyant in heart, but the poor little writhing son or daughter on the couch. The infant sufferer is the moral king,

all hearts bow to its cries, all hands await its behests. So, in the larger circle of friends, the afflicted friend is the most thought of, felt for, and spoken about. James Garfield on his mortally suffering couch, swayed an influence for the time mightier, and deeper, than any king. The moral power of Christ Himself in the world, arose out of suffering, the cross is His power in the world, it is the "arm of the Lord" revealed.

II. A good man in weakness becomes "strong," in HIS CONSCIOUSNESS OF DEPENDENCE ON THE ETERNAL. The strength in worldly men such as it is, is in the material, and the material is shadowy, fluctuating, and fleeting. But the true strength of man is in conscious dependence on God. I see a man to-day rich in abundance of all temporal good, robust health,

enormous wealth, great popularity, his strength is in these. To-morrow he is bereft of the whole, all his possessions have vanished as a cloud, and he is shut up in the chamber, a pauper and a dying man. In that condition Christ is brought before Him, he believes in Him, accepts Him with an unquestioning faith, and hence he becomes possessed with the true power of a man, and he can say now, "When I am weak, then am I strong," strong in a power superior to the world. Conscious dependence on the Creator, and not on the creature, is the true strength. Having this, a man can be calm and triumphant amidst storms that shake the world. "The Lord is our refuge and strength."

III. A good man in weakness becomes "strong" in the EXPER-

IENCE OF DIVINE SUPPORT. God's rule is to fill the "hungry with good things," and to send the "rich empty away." "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." The pro-founder our sense of weakness, the more conscious we become of Divine supplies and trust in Him. When Paul and Silas lost their liberty, they became conscious of new strength, new supplies from God, and they sang praises. Never did the three Hebrew youths in Babylon have such manifestations of God to their souls as when in the burning fiery furnace. Was Daniel ever stronger than when he lost everything, when a pauper and a prisoner in the lions' den? "When I am weak, then am I strong." Strong in the supplies of Divine succour and support.

IV. A good man in weakness becomes



“strong” in HIS POWER FOR USEFULNESS. Never does a minister of the Gospel preach so effectively as when he is conscious of his own insufficiency, when his selfism, so to speak, is gone, and he becomes the organ of Divine truths.

Who are the men who have been, and still are, the most really powerful preachers, preachers whose words and spirit, go deep down into the souls of their hearers, and there work a moral revolution? Not the men

of self-consciousness, men in whose formal reasoning and pretensions rhetoric egotism rides rampant. No, but those who are overwhelmed with a sense of their own weakness, and who sigh out of the depths of their nature. “Who is sufficient for these things?” As our egoism wanes, our power for usefulness waxes strong, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” “When I am weak then am I strong.”

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### Strength.

“When adverse winds and waves arise,  
And in my heart despondence sighs,  
When life its throng of care reveals,  
And weakness o’er my spirit steals,  
Grateful I hear the kind decree  
That—“As my day, my strength shall be.”  
When with sad footstep, memory roves  
’Mid smitten joys and buried loves,  
When sleep my tearful pillow flies,  
And every morning drinks my sighs,  
Still to Thy promise, Lord, I flee  
That, “As my days my strength shall be.”

# Notes on the Epistle to the Colossians.

REFERRING our readers for all historical and critical remarks about this Epistle to the able Commentaries of LIGHTFOOT and ELICOTT, and FARRER's more recent "*Life and Work of St. Paul*," it is nevertheless necessary to carry into and throughout our consideration of the entire Epistle, what was its main purpose. Throughout St. Paul is dealing with the twofold evil that had arisen in the Colossian Church—an error half Judaic, half Gnostic—an error that was theological and practical. It arose from the wrong conception of matter as inherently evil and as demanding intervening mediators between the material system of things and God; and at making abstinence from contact with material things, as far as might be possible, very incumbent on the godly. This error has its modern analogies in Sacerdotalism, and in Pietism. To combat the error then and now the *Plenitude of Christ* must be preached; Christ the fulness therefore the all sufficient Mediator, therefore too the all sufficient Consecrator of the material system. The errors of the Ritualist, and of the Recluse are both met by this great fact.

## No. XVIII.

### CHRISTIAN GREETING.

"ALL MY STATE SHALL TYCHICUS DECLARE UNTO YOU, WHO IS A BELOVED BROTHER, AND A FAITHFUL MINISTER AND FELLOWSERVANT IN THE LORD: WHOM I HAVE SENT UNTO YOU FOR THE SAME PURPOSE, THAT HE MIGHT KNOW YOUR ESTATE, AND COMFORT YOUR HEARTS; WITH ONESIMUS, A FAITHFUL AND BELOVED BROTHER, WHO IS ONE OF YOU. THEY SHALL MAKE KNOWN UNTO YOU ALL THINGS WHICH ARE DONE HERE. ARISTARCHUS MY FELLOWPRISONER SALUTETH YOU, AND MARCUS, SISTER'S SON TO BARNABAS (TOUCHING WHOM YE RECEIVED COMMANDMENTS: IF HE COME UNTO YOU, RECEIVE HIM); AND JESUS, WHICH IS CALLED JUSTUS, WHO ARE OF THE CIRCUMCISION. THESE ONLY ARE MY FELLOWWORKERS UNTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD, WHICH HAVE BEEN A COMFORT UNTO ME. EPAPHRAS, WHO IS ONE OF YOU, A SERVANT OF CHRIST, SALUTETH YOU, ALWAYS LABOURING FERVENTLY FOR YOU IN PRAYERS, THAT YE MAY STAND PERFECT AND COMPLETE IN ALL THE WILL OF GOD. FOR I BEAR HIM RECORD, THAT HE HATH A GREAT ZEAL FOR YOU, AND THEM THAT ARE IN LAODICEA, AND THEM IN HIERAPOLIS. LUKE, THE BELOVED PHYSICIAN, AND DEMAS, GREET YOU. SALUTE THE BRETHREN WHICH ARE IN LAODICEA, AND NYMPHAS, AND THE CHURCH WHICH IS IN HIS HOUSE. AND WHEN THIS EPISTLE IS READ AMONG YOU, CAUSE THAT IT BE READ ALSO IN THE CHURCH OF THE LAODICEANS; AND THAT YE LIKEWISE READ THE EPISTLE FROM LAODICEA. AND SAY TO ARCHIPPUS, TAKE HEED TO THE MINISTRY WHICH THOU HAST RECEIVED IN THE LORD, THAT THOU FULFILL IT. THE SALUTATION BY THE HAND OF ME PAUL. REMEMBER MY BONDS. GRACE BE WITH YOU. AMEN."—*Col.* iv. 7-18.

As we read this last paragraph of our Epistle we are struck, First: With the *humanity of our holy religion*. There is a natural

tone about the ending of every one of Paul's letters: there is the naming of men, the greeting of friends, the talk about per-

sonal affairs. If the Bible were concerned only with systems, institutions, theories, doctrines, arguments, it would never be as it surely is, the great heart book of the world. Its charm is its humanness. And it is so of Christianity, because its Founder and its Theme, its Alpha and its Omega, is the Son of Man. Reading this last paragraph of the Epistle, we are struck, Secondly: *With the mutual fellowship of the early churches.* Between the Christians at Rome and Colosse, though the waters of the Adriatic rolled between them, there was, as these greetings indicate, intimate and intelligent personal fellowship. Passing from these introductory considerations of the great principles to be found here, let us notice three things about Christian greetings.

I. TRUE CHRISTIAN GREETING RECKONS VERY LITTLE OF SOCIAL POSITION. Who would know from the form of the greeting how vastly different were the social positions of Epaphras, the Colossian citizen, Luke, the cultured Jewish physician, and Onesimus, the runaway slave? It has been well said, "Men are not united to the Church of Christ by reason of similarity of calling, of knowledge or of position; not as

rich or poor, learned or ignorant, but as possessors of a common human nature, of common feelings, sorrows, joys and hopes. Once within its pale, his riches drop from the rich man, and his poverty from the poor, and each beholds a brother soul."

II. TRUE CHRISTIAN GREETING RECOGNISES FULLY THE INDIVIDUALISM OF MEN. There is here no dealing with the mere mass, the group; no speaking of all with the same tones of unctuous endearment as is common in some churches to-day. No, each has a separate niche in the esteem and affection of the Apostle. In the light of this greeting we see the Church is not a huge piece of mechanism, but a family of dissimilar, though related souls.

III. TRUE CHRISTIAN GREETING HONOURS GREATLY CHRISTIAN SERVICE. The only letter of introduction to a church Paul ever wrote is not to commend some wealthy or famous man, but a converted runaway slave. His epithets of praise are not those that describe rank or riches, or even culture, but usefulness. That he honours, and that the Church of Christ ought above all else to honour. Come the day when it will. Amen.

Bristol. URIJAH R. THOMAS.

# Seeds of Sermons on St. Paul's Epistle to Philippians.

Having gone through all the verses in the Epistle to the Ephesians (see "Homilist," Vol. xxii. to xxviii.), we proceed to develop, with our usual brevity, the precious germs of truth contained in this letter. The following remarks, as a standing introduction, may contribute some portion of light to the whole Epistle:—Notice (1) *The residence of the persons addressed.* Philippi—whose ancient name was Crenides—was a city of Macedonia, and called after the name of Philip of Macedon, because he rebuilt and fortified it. B.C. 358 and afterwards colonised by Julius Cæsar, who invested the population with the privilege of a Roman City. It was the first place in Europe where the Gospel was preached by Paul, an account of which we have in the sixteenth chapter of the Acts. It was during his second missionary tour, and about A.D. 53.—Notice (2) *The occasion of the Epistle.* The contributions which the Philippians had made towards supplying the Apostle's necessities when a prisoner at Rome, evidently prompted its production.—Notice (3) *The scene from which the Epistle was addressed.* That it was from Rome where he was a prisoner is clear, from chapters i. 1-13, iv. 22. It would seem from the Epistle that he was expecting a speedy decision of his case, and hoped to obtain his release. Epaphroditus had been despatched to him from the Philippian Church with pecuniary contributions for the Apostle's relief, and on his return the Apostle entrusted this letter for conveyance. This would be about A.D. 63.—Notice (4) *The general character of the Epistle.* It is all but free from any censure, and breathes a warm and generous feeling through every part. The Epistle gives us the impression that the Philippian Church was one of the most pure, consistent, and generous, of that age. About 40 or 50 years after this Epistle was written, we are informed that Ignatius, on his way to martyrdom passed through Philippi, and was most warmly received in that city.]

## No. XI.

### THE MORAL HISTORY OF THE CHRISTLY SPIRIT.

"LET THIS MIND BE IN YOU WHICH WAS ALSO IN CHRIST JESUS," ETC.—*Phil.* ii. 5-11.

"FROM a practical introduction in the familiar exhortation to follow the example of our Lord, St. Paul passes on to what is perhaps the most complete and formal statement in all his Epistles of the doctrine of His great humility. In this he marks out first the incarnation, in which, "being in the form of God, He took on Him the

form of a servant," assuming a sinless but finite humanity; and next the Passion, which was made needful by the sins of men, and in which His human nature was humiliated to the shame and agony of the cross. Inseparable in themselves, these two great acts of His self-sacrificing love must be distinguished. Ancient speculation delighted to suggest that the first might have been even if humanity had remained sinless, while the second was added because of the fall and

its consequences. Such speculations are indeed thoroughly precarious and unsubstantial—for we cannot ask what might have been in a different dispensation from our own, and moreover, we read of our Lord as “the Lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world” (Rev. xiii. 8; see also 1 Pet. i. 19), but they at least point to a true distinction. As the “word of God” manifested in the incarnation, our Lord is the treasure of all humanity as such; as the Saviour through death, He is the especial treasure of us as sinners.”—*Dr. Barry.*

This is one of the grandest passages in the Bible; it has been the arena of many a theological battle, the subject of many a sermon, aye, and of many volumes too. Eschewing, as far as possible, all verbal criticism and speculation, I shall turn it to a practical account by using it to illustrate the *moral history of the Christly Spirit*, the spirit which the Philippians in the preceding verses are exhorted to obtain and cherish. Using it with this view, there are two great facts to be noticed.

I. It is a spirit of SELF ABNEGATION. “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,” &c. Now this

“mind” or spirit he details as developed in Christ Himself. Developed, First: In what Christ did *not* do. “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” Or, as Dr. Davidson renders the words, “Did not think equality with God a thing to be grasped at.” “The term God here and in the following paragraph,” says Bengel, “does not denote God the Father; the *form* of God does not mean the Deity Himself, nor the Divine nature, but something rising out of it. Again, it does not signify the being equal with God, but something prior, the *manifestation* of God, that is, the form shining out of the very glory of the invisible Deity.” The *form* of man is not the man himself, so the manifestation of God is not God Himself. Now Christ did not seize at this manifestation, did not consider it a thing to be grasped at. Of the true Christly spirit it may be said, that when great good is to be done, it does not hold on to privileges, honours, dignities, &c. This is strikingly illustrated in St. Paul, “What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ” (Phil. iii. 7). Paul details this spirit as developed, Secondly: In what Christ *did* do. (1) “He



made Himself of no reputation." This should be rendered, "He emptied Himself," or stripped Himself of His original glory, the glory which He had with the Father before the world was. Not that He was less divine and great in time than He was before all time. But He did not appear so. He concealed His splendour in the veil of His flesh, so as to fulfil His redemptive mission. (2) He "took upon Him the form of a servant." "The three words," says Bengel, "form, likeness, fashion, are not synonymous, neither are they virtually interchangeable; there is, however, a connection between them; *form* means something positive, *likeness* signifies a relation to other things of the same condition, *fashion* relates to the sight and perception." The King of the universe a Servant! (3) "Was made in the likeness of man," and "found in fashion as a man." This does not mean that He had merely the appearance of a man and nothing more. He was a man, "made in all parts like unto His brethren." (4) He "became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." "His death," says Dr. Barry, "is not here regarded as an atonement, for in that light it could

be no pattern to us, but as the completion of the obedience of His life. He followed out the Divine will even to death, and to the death of the cross, a death of anguish and ignominy." Here is self-abnegation, and this self-abnegation is essentially the Christly Spirit. Self-sacrifice is the essence of religion. He that does not lose himself in the swelling tide of benevolent sympathy for lost souls, has not the "mind that was in Christ Jesus." Concerning this spirit notice that—

II. It is a spirit of DIVINE EXALTATION. Because of this self-abnegating love "God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name." Rather *the* name above every name. Perhaps all intelligent creatures through the universe have appellations by which they are distinguished from others and recognised. Angels have their names: Michael, Gabriel, &c. Some names are greater than others. It often happens that the name of one man towers in significance and grandeur above the name of a whole generation. Such names as Moses, Paul, Luther, Howard Garibaldi. But the Apostle declares that there is One "Name above every name,"

either on earth or in heaven, First: It is a *transcendent* name. "A name which is above every name." It is idealistically and independently perfect. There is no name like unto it in the universe. Above every name in every hierarchy in the creation. Secondly: It is a *morally conquering* name. "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow." There is a talismanic energy in this name. It has wrought wonders on our earth already, and far greater wonders it will work in the human mind "until all His enemies be made His footstool." It wins the mastery over the soul, aye, and gains ascendancy over all minds in the universe. "Of things in heaven and things in earth," &c. For "things" read "*beings*." "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." Thirdly: It is a *God-glorifying* name. "And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to

the glory of the Father." The acknowledgment of the glory of Christ is the acknowledgment of the glory of the Father as the Source of Deity manifested perfectly in Him. "And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. xv. 28).

CONCLUSION:—Here is the fixed law of heaven. The moral spirit that would ascend to true dignity, win a name that shall command the reverence both of earth and heaven, must empty itself of all selfish motives and personal interests. There are two hills lying opposite each other, one is the hill of personal pride—barren, bleak, cloudy; the other is the hill of Divine dignity—grand, sunny, blooming in beauty, and abounding in fruit, crowned with the pavilion of the God-head. No soul can ascend the one without descending the other; he must go down the brow of selfishness step by step, till he reaches the dark valley of self abnegation, and then upward he may commence scaling the sublime altitudes of Divine dignity and bliss.

## Homiletical Breviaries.

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No. CCCLIV.

### Man's Abiding Friend.

“THEY SAW NO MAN ANY MORE, SAVE JESUS ONLY, WITH THEMSELVES.” *Mark ix. 8.*

The disciples had just seen wonderful visions and heard wonderful voices, visions and voices that so entranced them that they wished to continue for ever on the “Holy Mount.” But now the voices were hushed, and the visions had vanished, but Jesus—the meaning of all the voices and visions—He remained. “They saw no man any more, save Jesus only.” So it ever is with His genuine disciples. Whoever and whatever vanishes from their presence and enjoyments, Jesus remains the ever-abiding Friend. I. Though their PHYSICAL HEALTH vanishes, He abides. Physical health, the chief blessing of our mortal life, sooner or later must vanish with all. Disease, accident and age, these take it away from the most vigorous and hale, so that the time comes when physical life through prostration and pain becomes all but intolerable. But *Jesus abides*. When “heart and flesh faileth” He is there to succour and strengthen the soul, there to bear it to one of the “many mansions” He has prepared. “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,” &c. II. Though their WORLDLY POSSESSIONS vanish, He abides. Secular wealth rightly used is an incalculable blessing, it not only serves to relieve from all worldly anxieties, but ministers to our own bodily comforts, and to our intellectual advancement, but also gives us power to help our fellow men, help them both temporally and spiritually. But how often are the disciples of Christ as well as others, by some fraud or misfortune, bereft of this ! How often do “riches take to themselves wings and fly away !” How often have large fortunes crumbled away in a day ! How often do those who have been cradled in opulence die in pauperism ! But when brilliant fortunes have vanished, like the bright cloud upon Tabor of old, the disciples have looked round and perceived that Jesus

was by their side. They heard His voice saying to them, "Take no thought for the morrow what you shall eat, or what you shall drink, nor yet for your body what you shall put on, is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" &c. III. Though their DEAREST FRIENDS depart, He abides. These disciples had been in wonderful society and heard their soul-transporting converse, "There appeared unto them Elias with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus." Many centuries had sped their course since these illustrious men had quitted this planet, and during the whole period peradventure, they had been living, studying, and serving in the supernal regions of soul. They had seen wonderful things, heard wonderful things, felt wonderful things, and here they were talking with Jesus, talking in the hearing of these disciples. But their stay was not long, they vanished. "And suddenly when they looked round about they saw no man save Jesus only." Good men are constantly losing from their social sphere those who have charmed them with their presence and inspired them with their talk. When listening to them either in the sanctuary, the club, or on the domestic hearth, they had felt it, 'good to be there.' But one by one they vanish; the time comes when the best is gone, and all is social desolation, and like the disciples they look round and "see no man any more, save Jesus only, with themselves." He is the abiding Friend, "the same yesterday, to-day and for ever."

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No. CCCLV.

### The True Life of Man.

"AND NOW, ISRAEL, WHAT DOTTH THE LORD THY GOD REQUIRE OF THEE, BUT TO FEAR THE LORD THY GOD, TO WALK IN ALL HIS WAYS, AND TO LOVE HIM, AND TO SERVE THE LORD THY GOD WITH ALL THY HEART AND WITH ALL THY SOUL?" *Deut. x. 12.*

What is the *true life of man*? The life of practical conformity to Divine claims. "What doth the Lord require of thee?" All is summed up and expressed in the text. I. LOVING REVERENCE. "To fear the Lord thy God, and to love Him." It is said that "perfect love casteth out fear." This is true if slavish fear is meant. But

the highest love is always associated with some kind of fear. (1) Fear of not acting worthily of the object of love. (2) Fear of offending the object of love. The fear not of His anger, but of our proving unworthy. II. PRACTICAL OBEDIENCE. "To walk in all His ways." God has "ways," that is, methods of action. (1) In *material nature* He has methods of action. An acquaintance with these is what is called science. (2) In *moral mind* He has methods of action. Acquaintance with these is the highest knowledge. These methods are contained in the Decalogue, and are embodied in the life of Christ. To walk in God's ways is: (a) The only *righteous* walk. (β) The only *secure* walk. Other walks are dangerous. (c) The only *elevating* walk. All other walks lead downward. III. HEARTY SERVICE. "Serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart," &c. Hearty service stands opposed to unwilling service, to mechanical service, all ceremonial and formal services. "Bodily service profiteth but little." To serve Him with all the heart is to serve Him with (1) *Perfect freedom*. (2) *Sunny cheerfulness*. (3) *Thorough completeness*. All the powers fully employed, &c.

## No. CCCLVI.

## Soul Resurrection the best of all Resurrections.

"THAT THEY MIGHT OBTAIN A BETTER RESURRECTION."—*Heb. xi. 35.*

If the resurrection of the body at the last day is here referred to, there is a "better resurrection" than that. Why better? I. Because it is a GOOD IN ITSELF. The resurrection of the body may become an intolerable curse: there is a resurrection of damnation. A thousand times better for the unconverted to remain for ever in their graves, than to rise and thereby have their anguish intensified. But soul resurrection is the man leaving his dungeon and his chains for liberty, his disease for health. It is the angel in embryo leaving the narrow and loathsome shell to bask its pinions in mid-heaven, and hold fellowship with the buoyant choristers of the sky. Soul resurrection is "better," II. Because it INVOLVES THE FREE CHOICE OF THE MAN. In the resurrection of the body man has nothing to do in hastening or delaying, in help-



ing or preventing it. It is as much outside the sphere of his voluntary effort as the fact of his birth or the configuration of his frame. Not so with the *soul* resurrection, for that man is responsible. "Arise from the dead," is the Divine command. Man gets some credit for soul resurrection, none for the resurrection of the body. Soul resurrection is "better," III. Because it REVEALS THE HIGHEST POWER OF GOD. The Divine power which will call up the mighty dead at last is mere fiat, force, volition. But something more is required to call up the sin-buried soul to spiritual life. It requires, so to say, the humanisation of Himself. He has to appear in human nature, and bring His own divine heart into contact with the world. Soul resurrection is "better," IV. Because it is the GRAND END OF ALL GOD'S DEALINGS WITH HUMANITY. What is the voice of God to man in all history? It is this: "Awake to righteousness, and sin not." "Arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you life." Through all the priest-hoods, prophethoods, preachings of the Old Testament this was His voice. To all He says, Break from your graves of guilt, prejudices, corrupt habits, and arise to a true life of holiness, love, and truth.

CONCLUSION:—The following extract from a discourse I preached many years ago, may be a fit close to these remarks. It is a sad thing to see men burying their own souls in materialism. Occasionally we read of living creatures being discovered in the heart of stones, and in the centre of old trees. Those living creatures were organised for the open air, some were made to bound freely over the earth, and others to sport on the wing over mountain and mead; but there they have been shut up for many a year; in some cases it would seem for many a century. When the labourer with his hammer smote, and the woodman with his axe cut down the tree, and thus opened their graves, they leapt with renewed life into their native spheres, there to enjoy a little heaven of their being. Those creatures *allowed* themselves to be thus entombed. Very slowly and very gradually did the particles in the case both of the stone and the wood build up their graves. At first it would have been easy for them to have broken through, but, as particle after particle gathered and consolidated, the difficulty increased, until, at last, their sepulchres became so firm that all effort on their part to liberate themselves was utterly abortive. These creatures typify to me the condition of souls in this world. Fresh from the Almighty

they come hither, organised for the atmosphere of universal benevolence, to explore the spiritual regions of truth, to serve the interests of the creation, and to hold unbroken fellowship with the Infinite. But, like these creatures, they allow themselves to be buried by those elements of the world that gather around them. The forces of carnality, self-seeking, and worldliness, begin at once, silently but unremittingly, to build up the grave of a new born soul. At first it would be easy for the young immortal to break through, but the forces go on until the grave is sealed, and the soul is buried. The world is filled with human bodies, but where are the morally living souls—souls whose every action is inspired with heavenly love, directed to the good of the universe and the glory of God? When, oh, when shall the gospel “hammer” break those rocky graves, and its mighty axe cleave these trees asunder, to disimprison these spirits, and give them the liberty with which Christ makes His people free?

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No. CCCLVII.

### Elijah on Mount Carmel: Religious Indecision and Religious Earnestness.

“AND ELIJAH CAME UNTO ALL THE PEOPLE, AND SAID, HOW LONG HALT YE BETWEEN TWO OPINIONS?” 1 Kings xviii. 21.

Here we see—I. RELIGIOUS INDECISION. “How long halt ye?” Halt, limp &c. A state of *pain* and *instability*. James describes this state of mind as “wavering like waves of the sea.” To-day a mirror reflecting the blue of heaven, to-morrow turbid, the day after foaming. Four causes of this state of indecision. (1) *Multiplicity of opinions*. A split between Judah and Israel. (2) *Religious Inconsistencies*. (3) *A desire to please men*. Love of popularity &c. (4) *Selfishness*. We put one pleasure over against another, like a child vacillating between grapes, and glittering red cherries. We want the best things for ourselves. II. RELIGIOUS EARNESTNESS. “If the Lord be God, follow Him,” &c. Elijah’s earnestness was marked by: (1) Self-forgetfulness. (2) By actions instead of speculation. (3) By relying on himself.

F. W. ROBERTSON, M.A.

## *Literary Notices.*

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[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

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THE PREPARATORY HISTORY AND FINAL DESTINY OF NATIONS OF  
MEN. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark.

We cannot do better than transcribe the contents of this somewhat remarkable book. It consists of the following chapters:—  
I. The Disclosed Design of Human Existence—The Heaven and the Earth of Man's Nature—An Earthly Man and a Heavenly Man—The General Outcome of Past History—The Lord's Original Exclusiveness—The Lord's Sacrifice and the World's Offering—The Lawlessness of a Natural Spirit—The Originating Seeds of Evil and Good—The Constituents of a Living Soul—The Character and Works of a Natural Human Spirit—The Two Seeds of Man's Generation and Regeneration—The Revealed Ultimate Aim—The Finished Portion of Christ's Work. II. The Spirit of Jesus Christ—The Common Salvation—The New Heaven of the Human World—The Sun and the Moon of the New Heaven—The Internal and the External Light of its Sun—The Light Promised at Evening Time—The Two Advents of the Lord's Christ—The Finishing of the Preparatory Work—Britain's New National Organic Form—The Clouds of Heaven—The Voice of God in Human History. III. Some Consequences of Human Disobedience—The Work of Human Regeneration—The Work of Human Redemption—The Perfected Spirit of Both—The Great Preliminary Work—The Chosen Individual Few—Three Distinct Classes of Men—Two Intelligent Seeds of Men—The Conflict Waged in Human History—The Temporary Withdrawal of Restraint—The Son's Self-begotten Change—The Father's Glory in the Eternal Past—The Signifi-

cation of Antediluvian Wickedness—The Gradual Unfolding of the Father's Glory—The Frame of a City in its Three Parts. IV. The Chief Invisible and Intellectual Factors—The Counsel of Self and God's Purpose—Two Parallel Lines of Human History—One Distinguishing Characteristic of a Time Appointed—A Triple Foundation of Times Appointed—Outward and Visible Historical Sign-posts—The Advent of the British National Temple—A Wheel in the Middle of a Wheel—Another Characteristic of Times Appointed—Man's Natural Incapacity for Self-government—A Triple Personal Representation of Human Sovereignty—The Individual and National Aspects of Human Regeneration—One Portion of Our Image after Our Likeness—The Origin of Evil in the Human World—The Patiently Enduring Power of Long Suffering—The Beginnings and Endings of Two Times Appointed—The Signification of the Sceptre of Judah—Two Historical Rings or Parallel Times Appointed. V. David's Fall and Solomon's Declension—The Division of Israel's Dominion between Two—The House of Judah and the House of Israel—The Unsheathing of the Sword of Conflict—The Most Glorious Issue of the Conflict—The New National Departure—The Nature of the Conflict greatly Changed—An Important Joint Terminal and Central Stage—An Entirely New Phase of the Great Conflict—The Abundant Elements of this New Phase—The First and Second Advents of the Son of Man—The Time of Restoring the Kingdom to Israel—A Regenerated Image of the United Hebrew Monarchy—Four Successive Phases of the Great Conflict—Their Appearance a Wheel in the Middle of a Wheel. VI. The Two Extremes of the Father's Glory—The Unavoidable One-third and Two-thirds Proportions—Man's Natural Body, the Image of a Natural Spirit—Naturally Irreconcilable Essences of Mutual Antagonism—Individual Natural Spirits and their Human Image—The Limit of the Comparing Manner of Illustration—The Exclusive National and the Universal National Man—The Intellectual Aspect of a Spiritual Organic Form—The Growing Experimental Knowledge of Evil in England—The National Spirit of Benevolence and Universal Toleration—The Image set up in England. VII. The Spirit of Life from God—Four Living Creatures in the Likeness of a Man—The New National Constitution of Good Human Government—The New Begotten Spirit of the Son of Man—The Natural and the Spiritual Sodom—Two Ways in which the Power of Evil is Terminable—The Evil Power Self-begotten in the Adversary—The

Eternal Power of Self and God's Holy Power—England's National Discipline and Correction—Two Accomplished Results of the Shaking Process—Four Developed Phases of the Mystery of Iniquity. VIII. The Tripartite Development of the National Temple—The Moslem Dominion of Saracens and Turks in succession—The Overthrow of God's Work by the Adversary—The Number of a Man or a National Organisation—The Street of the Great City Spiritually called Sodom—The Subverted Order and Law of Grace Spiritually called Sodom—The Subverted Order and Law of Grace Restored—The Results in England and France of the War Against the Witnesses—The Father's Purpose Made Visibly and Intelligently Manifest—The New French National Organic Form—Its Sovereign Functions and Executive Constitution—The International Organic Union of England and France. IX. The First Constituent Portion of the Temple of Heaven—The First Constituent Portion of the Temple of God—The Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony in Heaven—The Coming of the Son of Man in a National Cloud—The Sign of the Son of Man in Heaven—The Darkening in Succession of Britain's Sun and Moon—Britain's Tendency to Vain Boasting Chastised—The National Resurrection of Christ's Spirit—The Consequent Impotence of the Adversary's Spirit—Britain's National Heart Turned Back Again—The Beginning and End of Christ's Resurrection—Collapse of the Military Power of the Second French Empire—The Individual Collapse of its Princely Personality—Britain's Revived Spirit of Imperialism—Its Humiliation and Extinction. X. The Father's Sacrifice and the Son's Offering—The Individual Human Fruits Thereof—The Apparent Curse Turned into a Blessing—The Substitutionary Manner of its Accomplishment—There is One Body and One Spirit—The Blessed Results of the Flood—A New Fountain of Living Human Waters—The Moving Power of Human Progress—The Fraying and Casting out of the Four Oppressive Horns—One Wheel Upon the Earth with His Four Faces—Historical Phases of God's Voice Twice Heard—The Advent of the New United Italian Kingdom—The Highly Exalted Name of the One Mediator—The Two Kinds of His Acquired Experimental Knowledge.

The work, though very condensed, contains not a little that is narrow in doctrine and unfounded in speculation.



A WISE DISCRIMINATION, THE CHURCH'S NEED. By T. U. DUDLEY D.D. London : James Nisbet & Co., Berners Street.

This volume, consists of four Lectures of the Bohlen Lectureship, a Lectureship established in the city of Philadelphia in connection with the Episcopal Church. The Trust of the Lectureship requires that a course shall be delivered annually in the month of May, and that the subjects from time to time should be such as are in accordance with what are called the Bampton Lectures at Oxford. The Trust required also that the first of the course should be delivered by the present author, Dr. Dudley. The subjects he has selected, and the manner in which he has treated them, not only justify the choice of the first lecturer, but constitute a volume of intrinsic worth, and specially adapted for the study of every evangelical teacher. The able author, though a Churchman, puts creeds and rituals in a very subordinate position, as mere human productions, and demonstrates that faith in the Person of Christ, and not in human propositions concerning Him, is the great essential. The following extract will indicate to our readers the character of the book : " I believe that the evil of our Christian age, the burden under which the religion of Jesus Christ is being wearied, so that its mighty strength cannot be displayed, is the erecting of mere theological opinions and theories into articles of the faith : the making tests of communion with the Church on earth other than the one simple, all-embracing test of the Apostle, the loyal acceptance of Jesus Christ, the risen Saviour, as the very hidden man of the heart, that animated, enabled, restrained, directed, controlled by His Spirit, the life we live therefore may be His life : and the honest confession of this acceptance publicly, as He appointed." Most heartily do I recommend this book to the thoughtful perusal of every preacher, young or old, and of every section of the Church.

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SIR ROBERT PEEL. By GEORGE BARNETT SMITH. London : Isbister & Co., 56, Ludgate Hill.

This is a very interesting biography. The life of one of England's most distinguished statesmen is here set forth with clearness and candour. He lived in a stirring period of our history, and had to deal with some of the most important political questions. Such a work as this requires no recommendation from us. What a number

of names pass before us in these pages who seem to us but as yesterday prominently active in the public concerns of our country: Sir James Graham, Richard Cobden, Macaulay, Melbourne, O'Connell, Palmerston, Aberdeen, Brougham, Macintosh, Sydney Herbert, Roebuck, Russell, Wellington, Disraeli! Where are they? All vanished as a dream. Truly, as Burke said, "We are all shadows, and pursuing shadows."

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A CONTINENTAL SCAMPER. By PERISCOPE. London: Bemrose & Sons, 23, Old Bailey.

This book records reminiscences of what the author calls a "rush" through Holland, Rhenish Prussia, Bavaria, and Switzerland. With great candour, the writer says that these pages have been penned simply to gratify his *cacòthes scribendi*, and are launched upon the literary sea with little promise of reaching the shores of popularity, but with the prospect rather of being becalmed amidst indifference and neglect, or of foundering beneath the storms of adverse criticism. Yet

"Tis pleasant, sure, to see one's name in print,  
A book's a book, although there's nothing in't."

Do not conclude from this that the book is not worth reading. It abounds with interesting matter, and is sprightly and sparkling.

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THE BLACK SPECK. A TEMPERANCE TALE. By F. W. ROBINSON. London: R. Willoughby, 27, Ivy Lane.

This work is written in the interests of temperance, and will, we think, contribute not a little impulse to that good cause. Those who have read the author's other productions, "Church and Chapel," "Mattie: a Stray," &c., &c., will anticipate a treat in the perusal of these pages. Nor will they be disappointed.

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POST MORTEM. Blackwood & Son.

This is a queer book. It is a piece of interesting reading. It is a record of experiences unreal and unlikely. The author writes as a man living in chaotic realms after death. He meets not only with his parents, and old acquaintances, but with his dog, his horse, and with devils also, not a few, who hurl him about in every direction.



## Leading Homily.

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### THE AMEN TO THE SUBLIMEST OF ALL PRAYERS.

“O RIGHTEOUS FATHER, THE WORLD HATH NOT KNOWN THEE : BUT I HAVE KNOWN THEE, AND THESE HAVE KNOWN THAT THOU HAST SENT ME. AND I HAVE DECLARED UNTO THEM THY NAME, AND WILL DECLARE IT : THAT THE LOVE WHEREWITH THOU HAST LOVED ME MAY BE IN THEM, AND I IN THEM.” (John xvii. 25, 26).

EXPOSITION : — Ver. 25. —

“*O righteous Father.*” The

“*O*” should be omitted.

“*The world hath not known Thee,*” or “*knew Thee not.*”

“*But I have known Thee,*” or better, “*I knew Thee.*”

“*And these have known,*” or more correctly “*these knew*”

“*that Thou hast (didst) sent*

*me.*” All this being regarded as past. I knew Thee, these disciples knew Thee, but the world knew Thee not.

Ver. 26. “*And I have declared*” (ἐγνώρισα made known) “*Unto them Thy name and will declare it.*” Will make it known.

HOMILETICS:—The following subjects are here suggested to our reflections : *God and the world, Christ and His school, the preacher and his mission.*

I. GOD AND THE WORLD. First : Here is *God*. “*O righteous Father.*” Here is a subject for thought ; this is infinitely the grandest, the most invigorating, and ennobling that can be brought within the range of

creature intellect. Notice (1) His *relationship*. "*Father*." No relationship more intelligible, attractive, morally assimilating than this. It means *causation, affection, resemblance*. Christ never represents God as an inexorable judge, a mighty monarch governing the universe by rigorous laws, but as a Father full of the tenderest concern for the well-being of His children. His God was not a cold king upon the throne, but a loving Father whose heart yearns for the return of His prodigal children. Ah me ! How theologians have calumniated this God ! Notice, (2) His *character*. "*O righteous Father*." There is such a thing as rectitude in the universe, the sentiment of right is co-extensive with the moral creation. What is right ? Not something independent of God, some principle outside of Him. The idea is preposterous and pernicious. His existence is the foundation of all right, His will the standard of all right, His works and words the revelation of all right. Our Father not only never has done wrong, but never can do wrong. All consciences in the universe, however fallen and miserable, are bound to admit that "just and right is He." Let us trust our Father, He will never wrong us. His righteousness is not opposed to love ; nay, it is love itself. Love sternly resisting all that will injure the moral universe, aye and sometimes overwhelming in ruin the resisting forces. It is love uprooting the weeds out of the Paradises of virtue. Love often binding corrupt spheres of intelligences in the iron band of frost in order that the spring may be more free from the pestiferous, and more abundant with the beautiful and the good.

Secondly : Here is the *world*. "*The world hath not*

*known Thee.*" That is unregenerate humanity. What ignorance is this, the worst of all ignorances. This ignorance is (1) most universal. The barbarian world "*hath not known Thee,*" did not know Thee, and do not know Thee, it is sunk in idolatry, superstition, and gross sensuality. The civilised world knew Thee not, nor does now. When this confession was made Egypt, Greece, and Rome had worked their intellects, made discoveries and advanced considerably in civilisation. They had their philosophies, their religions, and their arts, but even in Athens, the eye of Greece, God was the "unknown." The conventionally Christian world "*hath not known thee.*" Its science often denies Thee, its literature, commerce and politics ignore Thee, its creeds and its Churches malrepresent Thee. This ignorance is (2) most inexcusable. Men may have just excuses for not being scholars, historians, scientists, but they have no excuse for not knowing God. Nature is made to reveal God, and it does so everywhere, in every form that strikes the eye, or sound that falls on the ear. The soul is made to know Him, its eyes and ears and touch are given for this purpose. He is ever with us : He is in us, and we in Him. The blindness of the man who shuts his eye to the Sun, is not more inexcusable than the ignorance of the man who knows not God. This ignorance is (3) most ruinous. The man who is ignorant of God is in moral midnight. The distinguishing germs and faculties of his soul are as dead as the buried seed on which the quickening sun of heaven never falls. Ignorance of God is the "blackness of darkness." Another subject here is—

II. CHRIST AND HIS SCHOOL. First : Christ. "*I have*



*known Thee.*" From any lips but those of Jesus how presumptuous would these words sound. Through the teeming millions of the race, including the greatest scholars, geniuses, sages of all ages, who could say this to his Maker? (1) No one had the *opportunity* of knowing God that Christ had. He was in the "bosom of the Father." He knew the motive that prompted the creative act, and the plan on which the whole was organised. (2) No one had the *capacity* of knowing God that Christ had. Looking at Him merely as a man, and judging of Him by His sublime utterances, what an intellect He had, how keen and how far reaching its vision, how immeasurable its sweep, how firm its grasp, how amazing its fertility. What is the greatest human intellect to His? What is a blade of grass to the majestic cedar, a bee to the imperial eagle, a rushlight to the noontide sun? (3) No one had the *heart* for knowing God that Christ had. No person can really know another unless he has heart sympathy with him. To know all the facts of a man's history is not to know the man. You must be one with a man in soul in order to understand him. Christ was one with God in a transcendent sense. "*I and my Father are one,*" one in heart, spirit, and purpose. Notice: Secondly—Christ's School. "*These have known that Thou hast sent Me.*" All His genuine disciples know this. Without this knowledge, indeed, they could not enter His school. How did they know it? (1) By the *mighty work which He wrought*. "We know that Thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles that Thou doest." (2) By the *sublime doctrines He propounded*. His ideas about God, the universe, duty, destiny, were not only sub-

limely original, but so accordant with the reason, conscience, the moral intuitions, and the deep felt wants of humanity, that people were constrained to ask the question, "Whence had this man this wisdom?" (3) By the *manner of His teaching*. "Never man spake like this man." There was something so natural, so unconventional, so spontaneous, so rational, and devout in His manner, that all His hearers felt He was not like the Scribes and Pharisees, they had never heard such a teacher before. They felt He was the Master of their souls. (4) By the *matchless purity of His character*. There was a moral halo about Him which all felt detached Him from them. Though He mingled with them, sat with them, feasted with them, they all felt that morally He was not of them, that He was made higher than they. Even Peter said, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man." The ruffians in the garden fell prostrate before the majesty of purity that sat upon His brow. Notice—

III. THE PREACHER AND HIS MISSION. What Christ did is the genuine work of every true preacher. What was the work? First: A persistent declaration of the Divine character. "*I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it.*" To declare self, theories, or speculations, about God is what Churches do, but to declare "His name," His moral character, the *essence* of which is love is what Christ did and does. All His moral perfections, all His true glory are rooted in love. Secondly: A persistent declaration of the Divine character in order to diffuse Divine love into human souls. "*That the love wherewith Thou hast loved me may be in them.*" Alas! how many there are who so preach God as to transfuse into the minds of their

hearers terror, abhorrence, loathing, atheism. He only is the true preacher who so presents God to his hearers as to transfuse into them God's love.

CONCLUSION :—I have thus gone through this wonderful prayer—a prayer which reveals at once the heart of man and the heart of God. We see in it all that is glorious in renewed human nature, and all that is loving and tender in the heart of the Infinite. I have assumed that the prayer here is a genuine record of the devout utterances of Jesus. Men have asked how could they have been recorded? There is no proof that the Apostle had a pencil in hand to note down the sublime words as they fell from those sacred lips. Be it so. Was not John present, and the other ten disciples? Would they not be all profoundly interested in Him, and all they heard Him say? Would not every tone be marked, every sigh noticed? Does not memory always seize and hold most tenaciously everything in which the heart is most deeply interested? Since most of us know men who can repeat whole sermons from memory, is it not likely that every listener to this prayer would retain it? And then when they met together—which probably they would—inmediately at its close, would not each one repeat to the other what he heard, and thus, in comparing their recollections, would it be possible for a single word to be lost? Profoundly conscious am I of my lack of qualifications, both intellectual and moral, to do anything like justice to such a transcendent composition as this, yet I have not dogmatised, I have endeavoured to free myself from all theological predilections in looking through the words. In consulting the expositions of others, both ancient and modern, I have been saddened at discovering the

prejudicial theological influence under which each expositor has laboured. They have spoken of the “counsels of eternity,” and the contract between Christ and His Son before the foundation of the world was laid, or the wheels of time commenced their revolutions. They have penetrated the Divine essence, and laboured to expound the mysterious connection between Christ and the Father. All this I regard as impiously presumptuous and fruitful only in the pernicious.

It would be well for all theologians to take to heart the words of Thomas Carlyle:—“Is this what thou namest ‘Mechanism of the Heavens’ and ‘System of the World;’ this, wherein Sirius and the Pleiades, and all Herschel’s Fifteen-thousand Suns, per minute, being left out, some paltry handful of Moons and inert Balls had been looked at, nicknamed, and marked in the Zodiacal Way-bill; so that we can now prate of their Whereabout; their How, their Why, their What, being hid from us, as in the signless Inane? Systems of Nature! To the wisest man, wide as is his vision, Nature remains of quite *infinite* depth, of quite infinite expansion; and all Experience thereof limits itself to some some few computed centuries and square-miles. The course of Nature’s phases, on this our little fraction of a Planet, is partially known to us, but who knows what deeper courses these depend on; what infinitely larger Cycle (of causes) our little Epicycle revolves on? To the Minnow every cranny and pebble, and quality and accident, of its little native Creek may have become familiar; but does the Minnow understand the Ocean Tides and periodic Currents, the Trade-winds, and Monsoons, and

Moon's Eclipses; by all which the condition of its little Creek is regulated, and may, from time to time (*unmiraculously* enough), be quite upset and reversed? Such a Minnow is Man, his Creek this Planet Earth; his Ocean the immeasurable All; his Monsoons and periodic Currents the mysterious Course of Providence through *Æons of Æons*. Metaphysical Speculation, as it begins in No or Nothingness, so it must end in Nothingness; circulates and must circulate in endless vortices; creating, swallowing—*itself*! Which of your Philosophical Systems is other than a dream-theorem; a net quotient, confidently given out, where divisor and dividend are both unknown? What are your Axioms, and Categories, and Systems, and Aphorisms? Words, words. High Air-Castles are cunningly built of Words, the Words well bedded also in good Logic-mortar; wherein, however, no knowledge will come to lodge. Like a God-created, fire-breathing Spirit-host, we emerge from the Inane, haste stormfully across the astonished Earth, then plunge again into the Inane. But whence? O Heaven, whither? Sense knows not; Faith knows not, only that it is through Mystery to Mystery, from God and to God."

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PRAYER.—Do not think that it is necessary to pronounce many words. To pray is to say, "Let thy will be done;" it is to form a good purpose; it is to raise your heart to God; it is to lament your weakness; it is to sigh at the recollection of your frequent disobedience. This prayer demands neither method, nor science, nor reasoning; it is not necessary to quit one's employment; it is a simple movement of the heart towards its Creator. The best of all prayer is to act with a pure intention, and with a continual reference to the will of God. Hence, it depends on ourselves whether our prayers be efficacious. It is not by a miracle, but by a change of heart, that we are benefited by a spirit of submission.—*Fenelon*.



# The Preacher's Homiletical Commentary.

## HOMILETIC SKETCHES ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

**OUR PURPOSE.**—Many learned and devout men have gone *Philologically* through this *TEHILLIM*, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough HOMILETIC treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

**OUR METHOD.**—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1) THE HISTORY of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2) ANNOTATIONS of the passages. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase or allusion that may occur.—(3) THE ARGUMENT of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4) THE HOMILETICS of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts and indicate such sermonizing methods as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

### No. CXLIX.

#### The Voice of the Church.

"SAVE NOW, I BESEECH THEE," &c. Ps. cxviii. 25-27.

#### *The Reception of the Festal Procession.*

**ANNOTATIONS:**—Ver. 25. "*Save now, I beseech Thee, O Lord: O Lord I beseech Thee send now prosperity.*" "*Save now.*" "The original word *Hosannah*, or, *Save I pray*, was repeated with the verse following by the multitude in their enthusiastic welcome of Messiah into His kingdom."—*Fuller.*

Ver. 26.—"*Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; we have blessed you out of the house of the Lord.*" The priests and Levites here

welcomed those who entered the temple.

"Who in Jehovah's name draw near, Blessed is he; we hold him dear: We bless you on your holy road; We of the house and shrines of God."  
*Keble.*

Ver. 27.—"*God is the Lord which hath showed us light.*" That is prosperity amidst the light of our adversity, specially alluding to the pillar of fire that shone by night on the children of Israel. Exodus xiii. 21, and iv. 20. Nehemiah ix. 12, "*Bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar.*" "The

sacrifice—lit., the feast, hence here the festive victim (Exodus xxiii. 18; 2 Chron. xxx. 22) At the feast of tabernacles, especially, there were many sacrificial victims offered him (xxix. 13) Josephus (Antiquities viii. 14) calls it “a feast pre-eminently holy and great.” The sense is, since God is Jeho-

vah, the faithful, unchangeable, fulfiller of His promises to His people, as He has now shown Himself, let us testify our gratitude by sacrifices. *Even unto the horns* (or horn-like extremities in which the altar culminates) *of the altar on which the blood of the sacrifices was sprinkled.*—*Fausset.*

HOMILETICS:—We take these words to illustrate the voice of the Church—

I. The voice of the Church IN RELATION TO ALL. Here is the voice of prayer. “*Save now, I beseech Thee, O Lord: O Lord, I beseech Thee, send now prosperity.*” This is the prayer of all those who were on this occasion outside the sacred enclosure, and this is the prayer which the universal Church offers on behalf of all who are outside. First: It is a prayer for immediate salvation. “*Save now, we beseech Thee, O Lord.*” The great want of mankind is, salvation from their sins. Secondly: It is a prayer for immediate prosperity. “*I beseech Thee, send now prosperity.*” There are different kinds of prosperity. Some prosperities become curses. It often happens that the more a man prospers in the world, the higher the secular heights he reaches, the deeper the moral depths into which he falls. Temporal prosperity is often spiritual adversity. The prosperity which is here prayed for is soul prosperity—prosperity in all that is Christ-like. “Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

II. The voice of the Church in relation to those WHO ARE ENTERING IT. “*Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.*” Here is a hearty welcome. The

true Church is always ready to welcome those who enter it in the name of the Lord. There are, of course, conventional Churches and sects who only welcome in the name of their creed. The true Church throws its doors open to all, and addresses its invitation in tones of earnest love to all, saying "Oh, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money," &c. Nay, it goes further, it sends out its messengers to the highways and hedges, and seeks to compel those who are morally hungry and thirsty, to come to its feast.

III. The voice of the Church in relation to ALL WITH-IN. "*God is the Lord, which hath showed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar.*" First: It is the voice of mutual congratulation. He "*hath showed us light.*" How blessed are we!

"Why were we made to hear Thy voice,  
And why whilst there's room;  
While thousands make a wretched choice,  
And rather starve than come?"

Secondly: It is the voice of mutual exaltation. "*Bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar.*" We should all provoke one another to love and good works.

No. CL.

### Personal and Social Religion.

"THOU ART MY GOD," &c.—*Ps. cxviii. 28, 29.*

*Answer to those who have Entered the Temple.*

ANNOTATION:—Ver. 28, 29.

"*Thou art my God, and I will praise thee; thou art my God, and I will exalt thee. O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.*" These two utter-

ances are supposed to have proceeded the one from those who had just entered the assembly, and the other both from them, and those who welcomed them, the whole together.

HOMILETICS:—These verses may fairly taken to represent personal and social religion.

I. PERSONAL religion. “*Thou art my God, and I will praise thee.*” First: Here is a personal *appropriation* of God—“*My God.*” The human soul is so constituted that it must have God as its portion. We may have worlds, yet if we have not Him we cannot be satisfied. It is only when we can say, “The Lord is my portion,” “Whom have I in heaven but thee?” &c., that our moral hunger is appeased.

“Could our souls in love embrace  
All the spirits dear to Thee,  
Though they clasp’d all worlds in space,  
Empty, Lord, they still would be.”

Secondly: Here is a personal *adoration* of God. “*I will praise thee, I will exalt thee.*” “*Praise thee,*” not merely with lips, but with the life. “*Laborare est orare.*” Work is worship. Right living is true hymning.

II. SOCIAL religion. “*O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.*” In this all joined, those who had just entered, and those who were there to receive them. Our remarks on the first four Psalms will apply here.

CONCLUSION:—We trust that the rapid homiletic sketches that we have drawn from this Psalm will prove suggestive and helpful to those who are officially engaged in expounding God’s Holy Word. It is inspiringly interesting to remember that this Psalm was sung by Christ and His apostles on the very eve of His passion. His enemies were compassing Him about; the Lord was chastening Him sore; the Stone was being rejected; the Sacrifice was about to be bound to the altar: but the Lord was on His side; He would not be given over unto death; the rejected Stone would soon become the Head of the Corner.

## HOMILETIC GLANCES AT THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN.

[As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form of Sermonic Outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are:—"Introduction to New Testament," by Bleek; "Commentary on John," by Tholuck; "Commentary on John," by Hengstenberg; "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," by Westcott; "The Gospel History," by Ebrard; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon; "St. John's Gospel," by Oosterzee; "Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Dörner, Lange, Sears, Farrer, etc., etc.]

No. CL.

### Christ's reply to Pilate's address and Pilate's remark on Christ's Reply.

"THEN PILATE ENTERED INTO THE JUDGMENT HALL," &c.—  
(John xviii. 33-35.)

EXPOSITION:—Ver. 33. "*Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus unto him, and said unto him, art thou the king of the Jews?*" "Pilate," says Hengstenberg, "had set the alternative before the Jews, either to bring a formal accusation against Jesus, or to judge Him according to their own law. They declined the latter, and we may suppose they adopted the former." Pilate, therefore, enters again into the Prætorium or palace, and summoned Jesus before him. No honest investigation could he carry on amidst the in-

tolerant religionists and roaring rabble, hence he repairs into the palace where the Jews could not enter, for a private examination. Pilate puts the question directly, "*Art thou the King of the Jews?*" As if he said, this is the charge against you. Luke tells us, "They began to accuse Him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying that he himself is Christ a King." Pilate's question, therefore, means, Is this the case?

Ver. 34. "*Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing*



of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?" "The most probable interpretation of the question is," says a modern expositor, "that which regards it as establishing a distinction between the title king of the Jews as spoken by Pilate, and the same title as spoken by Jesus. In the political sense in which Pilate would use it, and in this sense only, the claim would be brought against Him in Roman law, He was not King of the Jews. In the theocratic sense in which a Jew would use that title He was King of the Jews." Grotius seems to hit the meaning of our Lord's words here. "Thou hast been so long a ruler and so careful a defender of the Roman majesty, and hast thou ever heard anything that would impeach Me of a design to usurp authority against Rome? If thou hast never known anything of thyself, but others have

suggested it, beware lest thou be deceived by an ambiguous word."

Ver. 35. "*Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered Thee unto me, what hast Thou done?*"

Pilate seems here to speak in a tone of a little irritation at the very suspicion that he paid any attention to the distinctions in a Jewish quarrel: As if he had said, "Do you suppose I am a Jew?" "He gets out of patience," says Godet, "What have I to do with all your Jewish subtleties? There is a supreme contempt in the antithesis, ἐγώ . . . Ἰουδαῖος (I . . . a Jew!) Then dismissing the Jewish jargon, which he had allowed the accusers to impose on him for a moment, he examines as an open straightforward Roman. "Come to business. What crime hast thou committed?"

### HOMILETICS :—Notice —

I.—CHRIST'S REPLY TO PILATE'S ADDRESS. To Pilate's question, "*Art thou the King of the Jews?*" Christ says, "*Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?*" This is not said in the spirit of insolence or disrespect, for that would be foreign to

His holy nature, but said, no doubt, as a warning to Pilate, not to be prejudiced against Him on account of the reckless charges of the intolerant Jews. “*Speakest thou this thing of thyself?*” Knowest thou anything thyself concerning my history to make you suppose that I presume to call myself a king in a political sense. We may legitimately use the words as suggesting an appeal to two classes of men in relation to Christianity? First: To the *infidel*. To the infidel we may say when he urges his objections to Christianity, “*Sayest thou this of thyself, or did others tell it thee?*” (1) When he objects to the *divinity* of the Bible. When he talks of its difficulties and discrepancies, states how he thinks the manuscripts were produced, and how they were compiled all in order to show that the book cannot be divine, we say to him, “*Sayest thou this thing of thyself or did others tell it thee?*” Art thou stating all these things on hearsay, or hast thou thoroughly and honestly investigated the question for thyself? If thou hast not done this, be silent, it is a personal question. The men from whom thou hast heard thy objections, perhaps, never examined for themselves, but received them from others, and they from others too. Hush! think for thyself. (2) When he objects to the *doctrines* of the Bible. When you hear him dilate on the absurdity of the incarnation, the atonement, the resurrection, ask him, “*Sayest thou this of thyself?*” Hast thou examined these doctrines so as to get an independent judgment? If not, hold thy tongue. In these questions every man should be “fully persuaded in his own mind.” We know of no better way to deal with moral infidels than this; silence them in their babblement by saying,

*“Sayest thou this of thyself, or did others tell it thee?”* As for us, “we speak that we do know, and testify what we have seen.” The words suggest an appeal to be made Secondly : To *preachers*. When you hear men talk nonsense, even blasphemy, in the pulpit in the name of the Bible, when you hear them advocate sacramentalism, reprobation, divine wrath to be quenched only by the blood of the innocent, the literal purchase of a certain number of souls to salvation by the mysterious agonies of the Son of God, and all such things as these, say to them, *“Sayest thou this of thyself?”* or, “Hast thou found out these things from the word of God by thine own devout, honest, independent, inductive study, or have others told thee? Hast thou not got all these horrid dogmas that misrepresent Christianity, outrage the intellect and shock the moral reason of mankind from others, from old theologies, hoary creeds, and floating traditions? No man is a true preacher who does not utter the things which he has “seen and felt and handled for himself.” Half the pulpits in England would be shut if the people asked the preacher, *“Sayest thou this of thyself, or did others tell it thee?”* We have here—

II. PILATE'S TREATMENT OF CHRIST'S REPLY. There are two things here worthy of notice. First : *A haughty scorn that is always contemptible.* Pilate answered, *Am I a Jew ?* Who does not see his curled lip and hear his arrogant tone in this ? “Do you suppose that I belong to that despised and conquered race? No, I am of Roman birth, and represent Cæsar, not only the master of this petty province, but the master of the race.” This is very contemptible. There is a scorn that is right and noble, a scorn for all that is mean,


and base and false. But to scorn birth is to the last degree despicable, albeit it is *common*. Those who are born in what are called the higher social circles, look with disdain upon the grades below, though from the grades below they all sprang, and by them they are all supported, and amongst them there are often those who, like Garfield, have a moral splendour before which all the brilliancy in castles and courts grows dim. Oh, Pilate, with all thy disdain for the men of Israel, there were greater ones among them than were ever found in Rome—Moses, Solomon, Daniel, Paul. Can you find their match in those who ever trod the streets of the imperial city? Another thing noteworthy in Pilate's treatment is, Secondly : *A judicial procedure that is commendable*. "*Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered Thee unto me, what hast Thou done?*" With their miserable prejudices, and conventional distinctions I do not concern myself. Tell me from thy own lips "*What hast thou done?*" Let me hear the truth from thee, tell out all. Now this procedure from a judge is most commendable, common sense and common justice tell us that in all cases the prisoner ought to be thus treated; but, to the disgrace of our Court of Judicature, the mouth of the accused is closed; charges are brought against him in the court, these are urged with legal skill and oratory, but he is not called into the private presence of his judge at the outset, and asked, "*What hast thou done?*" Tell me the whole truth about thyself, especially in relation to the charge brought against thee.

## Sermonic Saplings.

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### CENSUS FALLACIES. \*

“JUDGE NOT ACCORDING TO THE APPEARANCE, BUT JUDGE RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT.”—*John* vii. 24.

E are greatly indebted to the public spirit and painstaking care of one of our local daily newspapers for the Religious Census taken last Sunday in our city. Quite a crowd of obvious reflections are started by a perusal of these columns of figures; some of these reflections inspiring congratulation and thanksgiving, some of them kindling grief and shame, and some of them stimulating vows of labour and of prayer. But without even seeming to disparage such lessons as will surely be deduced—lessons of denominational inferences, or of evangelizing duties—I am concerned now to combat certain fallacies that a superficial study of these census returns is very likely to create—

I. The first fallacy is—THAT THE ATTENDANCES AT VARIOUS SERVICES DETERMINE THE NUMBER OF ADHERENTS OF VARIOUS THEOLOGICAL VIEWS AND ECCLESIASTICAL POLITICS. I am able the more boldly to insist on this in a Nonconformist Church, because the census shows that, while there were 47,000 attendances at the services of the Established Church, there was the astoundingly larger attendance at services voluntarily sustained and free

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\* Preached the Sunday after a “Religious Census” of attendants at places of worship, had been taken in Bristol.



from State connection of 69,000. But if we were led thus roughly to conclude that all the 47,000 were Churchmen, and all the 69,000 were Nonconformists, we should be guilty of a blunder that would indicate crass ignorance of a remarkable phase of our times. For much of the old narrowness that prevented the mingling of varied communions in worship has gone, or is going. In the Free Churches there is a very considerable number of worshippers who, by their attendance, express no opinion about State churchism, and so forth. Whilst it is notorious that in many Episcopal Churches there are attendants drawn there either by the ministry, or by the music, or by social sympathies, or frequently by social aspirations, who do not commit themselves to any convictions about Church or Dissent. There is enough of this in all directions to prevent the silly, and often sinful, practice of labelling whole congregations with the ticket of any sect or denomination.

II. A second fallacy is—THAT THE SERVICES, OR THE COMMUNIONS HAVING THE SMALLEST NUMBERS ARE NECESSARILY THE LEAST INFLUENTIAL FOR GOOD; OR THAT THOSE HAVING THE LARGEST NUMBERS ARE NECESSARILY THE MOST INFLUENTIAL FOR GOOD. Take, for instance, the service that has 3,000 or, some of those that have only about 30; who shall say that if there were only ordinary mortals in the larger, ordinary in capacity, and very ordinary in character, and it happened that there were an incipient Baxter, or Wesley, or Elizabeth Fry in the smaller group, the smaller would not be the mightier in influence? Science has been able to tell us that the storage of electric force does not depend on bulk. Who will say the storage of intellectual or of spiritual force

depends upon numbers? And so with the size of the aggregate communions. One of the smallest—the Society of Friends—has, by witnessing for its distinctive doctrine of “Christ within,” and by its unswerving devotion to the interests of humanity and liberty, exercised for two centuries, both upon the churches and the nation, an influence as far reaching as beneficent.

III. Another fallacy is—THAT THE LARGE NUMBER OF OUR POPULATION ABSENT FROM ATTENDANCE AT THE PUBLIC SERVICES LAST SUNDAY ARE CONSEQUENTLY TO BE CLASSED AS IRRELIGIOUS. Out of the 100,000, or perhaps 130,000, absent, there were many thousands—you fear, and I share the fear most deeply—absent from reasons altogether dark and evil. Profanity and Debauchery kept away their thousands, and Indifference kept away its tens of thousands from all contact with the means of grace, the House of Prayer, the Cross of Christ. But besides these, thousands were not in attendance at the services from reasons beyond their own control. There were the little children, and the infirm and aged, and the sick and the suffering, and all who watched by them. There are, too, many whose employments give them but an alternate Sunday of release from the absorbing occupations which civilisation demands. It is happier to remember that there were hundreds engaged in the city or the suburbs in direct Christian or philanthropic work. Nor may we forget that there would be many religious persons whose intellectual eccentricity or social deformity leads them to find other opportunities for reflection and devotion than those that are conventionally convenient. We must not fall into the error of talking of those who attend cathedrals, or

churches, or halls, or upper rooms, 'as if they were all who frequented "places of worship." The field, the mountain, the shore, the home can become a sanctuary as surely as the conventicle. We may not forget the well of Samaria, the stone at Bethel, or the bush in Horeb.

IV. A fourth fallacy is—THAT THE MULTITUDES WHO ATTENDED THE SERVICES ARE, THEREFORE, RELIGIOUS. Are all who attend school or college educated? Are all who go to the infirmary or hospital cured? Are all who frequent "Divine Service" saved? Indeed, this word "*Service*" is dangerous; for only they who love God truly serve Him.

*Redland, Bristol.*

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

## THE HOLY FAMILY. (A Christmas Sermon).

"AND (THE SHEPHERDS) CAME WITH HASTE, AND FOUND MARY AND JOSEPH AND THE BABE LYING IN THE MANGER."  
*Luke ii. 16.*

THIS was the first Christmas family that was ever gathered together in this world; the first, the most notable, and the holiest. The exceeding beauty of the group, its surpassing interest and attractiveness, its close affinity with our innermost instincts and profoundest sympathies, have been attested by the multiplied forms into which the hand of art has shaped it, under the familiar title of "The Holy Family"—than which perhaps no one subject in the world has been more frequently depicted. It is

not unnatural if the contemplation of that sacred group, parents and child, presented in the text, should remind you of a custom by which, more than any other season, Christmas is distinguished. Is it not the custom which calls from far and near the scattered members of the family, that on this day, if on no other, they may assemble under the same roof, at the same board, by the same fireside? And very much it were to be lamented, if a custom so salutary, so amiable, nay, I will say so holy, should be at all upon the wane amongst us. With some, indeed, it is so made a point of (if practicable at all), as to become almost a religious obligation. I mean that if the series of accustomed Christmas gatherings were by any untoward occurrence interrupted, there would seem to them something inauspicious, something ill-omened and alarming in the interruption, as if it were the first crack and symptom of a general break-up of the family. Nor, indeed, is it too much to apply the term "domestic religion" to the sentiments which periodically crave this blameless indulgence, and to the affections which are stimulated, sustained, and kept in exercise by these annual observances. Are not those feelings and affections a part of religion? Have not Christ's apostles classed domestic virtues and affections amongst the graces and the fruits springing out of inward and spiritual life. Have not God's choicest, sweetest, and most inestimable blessings been promised to the cherishing of family relations? Have not God's darkest curses been denounced—nay, not only denounced, but times without number actually and palpably and visibly visited upon the violation of those holy bonds? Everywhere in Holy Writ do we not find the smile of God

resting with unfailing benignity upon the maintenance of all the reciprocal obligations of a household ; whether as between husband and wife, parent and child, or still remoter kindred ? Even in the Old and more austere Testament we find brethren, *i.e.*, members of one family, “ dwelling together in unity ” compared with the genial exhalations of the dews of Hermon to refresh and fertilise the sister slopes of Zion. And in the New Testament we find the want of natural affection classed in the same verse with the most hideous and revolting misdemeanours. The Holy Jesus came first in likeness of a little child—and making one in such a one in the picture as our text presents to us—consecrated the most trivial of maternal cares by accepting them at the hands of Mary, His mother. The loftiest honour and the most marked affection He could testify to His obedient disciples was to call them His mother, His sisters, and His brethren. And if Mary the mother, without any exaltation of her above the approachable level of humanity, has been recognised by all Christendom as the pattern mother amongst all womenkind—if the first star that rose in Christendom, or that had a Christendom to rise upon, sloped through the windows of the shed in Bethlehem, gilding that little but complete domestic group presented in the text—nay, if all Christendom itself was then comprised in that family—then I am bold to say that in these facts we have a warrant for lifting the duty of cherishing and making much of domestic relationship to the highest rank of Christian obligations. And it is not extravagant to say that what contributes so largely to the maintenance of these affections as Christmas family meetings (so they be well and



wisely and temperately celebrated), have a right to claim not only toleration, but even something of encouragement, and would not be out of place in ranging themselves amongst the auxiliary and under the cheerful sanction of religion. And as some of those here present most likely contemplate partaking in some such celebration on the Feast of the Nativity, it seems not unsuitable to invite your thoughts to some consideration about those sacred affections with which such occasions ought to be in some degree connected. Do not, however, let me be misunderstood as suggesting any confused and incongruous intermixture of the graver and more sprightly elements in such festivities, or that either of the two should conflict with or displace the other. Everything in its own order. And if taken in their several and respective orders there is nothing in the solemnities of the religious observance or the coming anniversary that need disqualify the mind for sanctioning and sharing the happy exuberance to which young hearts will be likely to give way. Let some measure of religious observance have its claims allowed, some suitable sacrifice of prayer and praise call down God's blessing on the day. Let temperance, purity, charity, kindness, good temper, consideration for others, gratitude, affection, and everything that is "lovely, honest, and of good report," pervade all that we engage in on that joyous day. Whether it be work, or worship, or relaxation from both. And if this be so, then I do think there is such a thing, not only as innocent enjoyment, but innocent mirth too; and that, though actual religious exercise be suspended, the spirit of

Christ's humane and social teaching may be present. Christ may be present, for love may be present. I think that though the form of godliness, *i.e.*, the outward ceremonial of worship, be permitted for a time to be superseded by the vivacities of domestic hilarity, the spirit and power of godliness may remain without any sense of Divine displeasure or repulsion. Then will the beautiful time-honoured and familiar symbols of this gracious time assume a lustre and a freshness, which mere romantic sentiment and imagination cannot give them. The blazing Christmas log shedding its gleam on happy faces gathered round, will serve to kindle warm affections, which may, if it please God, retain their warmth the more genially in consequence through the coming year. And even if its pale ashes on the hearth may speak of some that see its light no more, or what is sadder far, shall speak of affections blighted, hopes defeated, fond illusions dissipated, credulous dreams dispelled, ingratitude alienation, and estrangement, yet still the laurel and the holly will be green upon the morrow, when friends are departed, and this surviving freshness in the ever-greens may tell you of a Love that never fades, but that watches over quick and dead, and if your own love has been of the right complexion, will restore you to each other in due time. To that divine, immortal Love I heartily commend you, and desire that you and all belonging to you, may find the approaching season in its most comprehensive, joyous, holiest, and most momentous sense, a "Happy Christmas."

The late W. H. BROOKFIELD.

## DIVINE WORSHIP.

“O COME LET US WORSHIP AND BOW DOWN, LET US KNEEL BEFORE THE LORD OUR MAKER.”—*Ps. xcv. 6.*

WORSHIP is that class of feelings excited by the contemplation of worth, and when applied to the Divine Being it expresses that unlimited veneration and love with which our whole faculties regard Him, and which we manifest in the performance of external acts in honour of Him, and as the utterance of our feelings. The worship of the Divine is an emotion most congenial to the deepest intuition of the human mind. In all ages, places, and conditions, this is true. Few exceptions, and these on this ground, regarded as depraved to the utmost degree. Our obligation to revelation to know the true *object* and *method* of worship. We see the condescension of God in its institution. It is well to reflect upon what we do so frequently, and which is the highest and most solemn act man can perform on earth.

I. THE COMPONENT ELEMENTS OF TRUE WORSHIP. As it is the chief fact with regard to man, so it is of the highest consequence. (1) *It has its inward principles.* Its root is in the soul. “God is a Spirit, and we must worship Him in spirit and truth.” There must be: (a) *Profound reverence.* This the basis of religious excellence, and is inspired by the contemplation of God and of ourselves in His sight. (b) *Humility.* (c) *Submissive trust and love;* and, (d) *Humble hope.* (2) *It has its proper external acts.* As the face is the index of the emotions, so outward acts are the index of the spiritual feelings within. There must be: (a) *Appropriate postures and demeanour.* Some affect to despise

these, but to such creatures of time and sense as we are, such are most needful and important. These outward acts should be cheerful, not forbidding, beautiful not superstitious, simple but not mean, and decorous in proportion to our civilisation and culture and wealth.

(b) *Appropriate times.* The letter of the New Testament does not give exact commands upon this, but we know from its Spirit that there must be *public* worship. Neglect of public worship a sign of secret alienation of the heart. (c) *Appropriate acts and places.* Prayer and praise the chief parts of our services. All that genius, art, or wealth can give may find its most fitting expression in erecting earthly temples for the Lord of Hosts. “Splendour of Churches is only blameable when it interferes with charity; God who requireth charity as necessary, accepteth the other also as being an honourable work” (com. Hooker Ecc. Pol. Bk. v. chap. xv.).

## II. THE REASONS RENDERING DIVINE WORSHIP OBLIGATORY.

(1) *It is based upon our relations to God and the constitution and nature of the human mind.* We naturally venerate greatness. God is the greatest of all beings in power and majesty. Our dependence upon God for every blessing. The *social* construction of the Church suitable to our wants. What blessings we gather from the loving memories clustering around the Church of God. (2) *It is a divine institution.* In the Old Testament it is abundantly commanded; taken for granted in the New Testament. (3) *It is of supreme importance to the mental and spiritual welfare of the world.* Its importance to *ourselves* is great. Worship maintains a sense of religion in the soul. Its relinquishment leads often to final apostasy. To *others* the value

is great. Without our days, and acts, and places of worship, men would become entirely abandoned to a worldly and irreligious life. Let public worship be abandoned, and a great restraint upon wickedness is removed out of the way. The maintenance of worship is the proclamation of the fundamental truths of religion, which bring blessedness to the individual soul, and peace and prosperity to society. Seek to attain the highest ends of worship in yourselves. Opportunities rapidly pass away. The hour of worship &c., soon over. Make your life one act of worship, "one great Psalm."

*Anthorpe Rectory,  
Lincolnshire.*

JAMES FOSTER, B.A.

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### GOOD OUT OF NAZARETH.

"CAN ANY GOOD THING COME OUT OF NAZARETH?"

*John i. 46.*

THESE words stand connected with the humble origin of the mighty empire of the great Messiah, and bring before us the unique claims and characteristics of the Christian religion. Nathaniel was amazed when he heard that the promised Redeemer had emerged from the obscure and odious village of Nazareth; and, with the statement of Philip, his guileless mind became puzzled and perplexed. The question of Nathaniel was a natural and reasonable one under the circumstances; he felt that Nazareth was not competent to produce *such a person* as the world had been looking for, and the prophets had predicted; and, that, indeed, out of such a place, evil



alone could be expected. The doubts of Nathaniel were removed when he was introduced to the Saviour, his prejudices were overcome, and he gave to the Son of God the full and fervent faith of his sincere and honest heart. Jesus was never ashamed to own that He came out of Nazareth; His name was frequently associated with the place during the days of His flesh, and when, after His ascension, He appeared to Saul of Tarsus, He proclaimed Himself "Jesus of Nazareth." The best and brightest Being that ever trod our earth, came out of Nazareth, and the fact is calculated to teach us most important lessons, giving to our devotion a deeper intensity, and to our faith a broader and firmer basis. The text suggests—

I. THAT LOCAL SURROUNDINGS, AS A RULE, LEAVE THEIR INDELIBLE STAMP UPON HUMAN CHARACTER. This fact, recognised by Nathaniel, has been acknowledged by thinking men in all ages of the world. Man, thus appears, largely, a creature of circumstances. Children born in heathendom, are nursed in idolatry and moulded in heathenism. Waifs and strays, in civilised society, become degraded and devilish through abandonment and neglect; corrupting scenes and sounds contaminate the heart and mind, and the way the twig of early life is bent, the tree of after life is inclined. This is one of the darkest and saddest problems that moral reformers of the present day have to solve. One of the outcomes of our present state of civilisation is, that the breach is widening between the rich and the poor, between the refined and the rude, and in the great centres of our labouring and artisan population, debasing influences crowd together in

augmenting numbers and power. In every part of our land there are Nazareths, and it is considered enough to stamp a person as ignoble and infamous, oftentimes, simply to say, that he comes out of such obscure and odious districts. Nazareth was supposed to affix its indelible stamp upon all who resided there, and its moral atmosphere was so impure, that no good thing was ever expected out of it. Yet, in Nazareth, "the Son of Man" was brought up, and from it He emerged, like the sun breaking through the mist and darkness of the night, and began His bright and beneficent career, with healing in His wings.

II. THAT SUCH FORMATIVE INFLUENCES CAN ONLY BE COUNTERACTED BY THE INTERVENTION OF SPECIAL EXTERNAL AGENCIES, OR INHERENT FORCE OF CHARACTER. All persons are not creatures of circumstances, some rise out of their obscurity in spite of obstacles; by the constraints of conscience, and the promptings of laudable ambition, and the force of character, masterhood over surroundings has been attained, and a way hewn out to exalted position and extensive power. Sometimes some external interposing agency has stepped in, and by measures of emancipation and education, persons, and even races, have been bettered, and disentangled from the lot their immediate surroundings have seemed to assign them as their destiny. There is hope for the worst of men, good can come out of Nazareth; the spiritual husbandman, and the moral reformer may toil hopefully on, there are glorious possibilities in our nature, there is a fulcrum on which the lever of truth and righteousness may be put, and by which even the most unlikely may be lifted from degradation and death, to holiness and life. The gospel is the leaven

to penetrate and permeate the whole of our humanity ; and, overcoming the depraved circumstances and conditions natural to man, to transform us into the moral image of God's dear Son.

III. THAT THE GREATEST ILLUSTRATION OF THE TRIUMPH OF INHERENT FORCE OF CHARACTER, OVER THE INFLUENCES OF LOCAL SURROUNDINGS, IS IN THE UNIQUE EARTHLY HISTORY OF JESUS CHRIST. Nazareth, where Jesus was brought up, and where He spent the formative years of His early life, could not possibly have produced such a character as His was. Indeed, no age or country has ever been equal to the production of *such a Person*. He was unlike the proud and pompous Roman ; unlike the vain and supercilious Greek ; unlike the prejudiced and bigoted Jew ; as well as unlike the mean and degraded villagers of Nazareth. He came forth to perform works, such as no man had ever wrought before ; and to utter words, such as no man had ever before spoken. The *conduct* and *character* of Christ were alike *superhuman*, and they stand alone and unrepeatable in the history of our world. The humble parentage of Jesus, the rustic character of His home at Nazareth, and His obscurity till He presented Himself on the banks of the Jordan to the Baptist John, make the beauty and brilliance of His character, the more wonderful and clear. Good came out of Nazareth ; the *Good* and *Glorious* ONE shone before men, with goodness that was immaculate, and glory that was incomparable. The uniqueness and perfectness of Christ's character cannot be accounted for, except we believe that He was "the Son of God," as well as "the Son of man." With this belief, we can understand how He could call attention to Himself,

as both able and willing to save ; how He was able to do works, such as mere men had never done before ; how He could utter predictions concerning Himself, and His Church ; and how it is, His name, which is above every name, is becoming more widely known, and more intensely loved every day.

CONCLUSION :—(1) Let us be thankful that the historical evidence of the deity of Christ is *sufficient*, and *satisfactory*. (2) Let us divest ourselves of prejudice and passion, when we investigate the character of Christ. (3) Let us seek to know, not merely as the result of examination, but of *experience*, how “good” Christ was, and *is*. (4) Let us endeavour to reflect His goodness in our characters before men, that we may thus recommend Him to their *faith*, *obedience*, and *love*.

F. W. BROWN.

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THE PREACHING TO MAKE MORALLY GREAT MEN.—The Rev. F. D. Power, the pastor of the late President Garfield, has made an interesting communication to the New York *Independent* in respect to his religious life and character. Concerning the “Disciples of Christ,” Mr. Power says, “The simplest and truest expression of their system of faith and duty may be given in the formula: Sincere heart-faith in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, and full obedience to all that He has commanded.” They discard, he says, “all human creeds, and names, and substitutes, for the divine Word, order, and ordinances.” The President’s mother was one of the “Disciples.” Mr. Garfield was an earnest and devoted member of this church, and often took part in the public services. “He held, in common with his brethren, the duty of Christians to be present at the Lord’s Supper on every first day of the week, and his place was rarely ever vacant. His figure (in the church at Washington) was familiar and beloved by all, as he walked to and from the house of God, his aged mother on his arm, and Mrs. Garfield at his side.” At one time, during his illness, the President knowing that at this church prayer was made for him continually, was heard to say: “The dear little church on Vermont Avenue, They have been carrying me as a great burden. When I get up they shall not regret it.”

# Germs of Thought.

## THE PREACHER'S FINGER-POST.

### A Good Resolve at the close of the Year.

"AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSE  
WE WILL SERVE THE LORD."—  
*Joshua* xxiv. 15.

This address of Joshua was made not to the rulers only of Israel, but to the whole nation; not of course to all the tribes in their assembled thousands, but to their representatives. The short clause which we have selected from the whole is pregnant with practical suggestions. It presents for our study man's highest service, man's grandest resolve, man's sublimest influence.

I. MAN'S HIGHEST SERVICE. What is that? To "serve the Lord." This service does not mean: First, Mere occasional

work. It is common to call public worship "divine service," but the service that is not always "divine" is never divine. All our activities should be divinely employed. Nor does it mean, Secondly: Mere *external* work. Bodily service profiteth but little. There may be preaching, and praying, and singing, and bodily mortifications and genuflexions, and yet no divine service. "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." "To serve Him" is to have all our powers at all times inspired and directed by a supreme regard to Himself. His ser-



vice, therefore, embraces all *places*, the market as well as the temple, all *times*, all days as well as the Sunday, all *departments* of activity, manual labour, mercantile transactions, professional engagements, and the pursuing and disseminating of knowledge. The text presents for our study—

II. Man's LOFTIEST RESOLVE. "We will serve the Lord." That is, I will act worthy of my nature, I will be a man; more, I will be like those angels who "serve Him day and night." This resolve implies two things. First: *Practically adopting HIS WILL as the supreme law of life.* "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" "Not my will, but Thine be done." Disagreement with His will is guilt and hell, harmony with His will is holiness and heaven. This resolve implies, Secondly: *Making love*

*for Him the dominant motive of life.* He cannot be served by any other motive. Human masters enquire not into the motive of their servants so long as they do the work required. The best servant is the man who does the most valuable work. Not so God. Labour to Him is nothing, motive is all. Were it possible for a man to conform to the will of his Maker, in every act of his life, unless he was influenced by supreme love he would be no true servant. The text presents for our study—

III. Man's SUBLIMEST INFLUENCE. "As for me and my house we will serve the Lord." He speaks for his family, and herein is implied a power to bring souls into the service of the Infinite. How can the head of a family bring his domestics into His service? Not *merely* by what is called family worship, reading

chapters and offering prayers morning and evening. Alas, I fear this is often done in such a formal, prosy manner as to repel domestics from His service. How then? By being thoroughly and loyally and constantly in the service ourselves. He who is truly in this

grand service will speak words that shall penetrate the soul of the listener, and impregnate it with a new life, manifests a moral character so majestic that shall not only *attract* the *attention* but *command* the *imitation* of the whole circle in which he lives.

### The Man of Mighty Faith.

"ABRAHAM WAS STRONG IN FAITH." ROM. iv. 20.

THE New Version reads, "Waxed strong through faith." At the outset I remark three things concerning faith: (1) *Faith is an instinct of the soul*. All rational creatures are made to believe, man is a *credulous* creature, he hungers for something to believe in. From the opening years of his childhood even to old age, he is in quest

of that on which his faith can feed. Hence the curse of the human race is that it believes too much rather than too little. Another remark I make is, (2) That *faith is essential to social life*. Unless men believed to some extent in men there could be no social order, progress, or co-operation; nay, no social life; they might live together gregariously as herds and flocks, but not as mem-

bers of a social system. Destroy all the faith that man has in man, and our markets, our enterprises, our governments would tumble to pieces. I make yet another remark, (3) That *faith has a diversity of objects*. All the objects of faith may be divided into two classes, the *contingent* and the *absolute*. By the former I mean, that which is fallible, uncertain and changing; by the latter, that which is infallible, immutable and eternal. Faith in the former class is enfeebling, fluctuating, imperiling; faith in the latter is strengthening, calming; and soul-securing. This is the true faith. faith in God. This was the faith that Abraham had; he believed in a supreme Personality that was absolutely perfect and all-sufficient. This made him the *man of mighty faith*. I select

two facts in his life to illustrate the mightiness of his faith:—

I. HIS LEAVING HIS OWN HOME AND GOING INTO STRANGE SCENES for no other reason than the command of God. “By faith Abraham when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed,” &c. (Heb. xi. 8-10). In order to judge of the mightiness of this man’s faith, we must take into account the forces with which he had to struggle. (1) There was the power of *his early associations*. He had to leave those scenes where he had lived seventy-five years, where he had spent the innocence of childhood, the poetry of youth, and the ripened energies of his manhood, where lived the friends of his early days, and where slumbered the dust of his ancestors. Fond memo-

ries, dear friendships, secular interests, would co-operate in strengthening the spell of that country on his heart. (2) There was the power of age *decreasing the inclination for change*. Young life is adventurous and nomadic, its romantic impulses yearn for foreign scenes, but Abraham was getting an old man; seventy-five winters had passed over him, and advancing years make home twice dear. Old men would rather starve in the scenes of their earthly life, than emigrate to distant lands. (3) There was the power of *uncertainty as to the future scenes*. He "went out, not knowing whither he went." Men are tempted to leave their country for new scenes by some testimony of the advantages and beauties of the scene to which they are invited; but this man knew nothing

of his future, he was taking a step in the dark. Notwithstanding all these obstructions, his faith in God was so strong that he obeyed His voice; he broke away from all the ties that bound him to the old, he roused the warning spirit of enterprise within him, and went forth, "not knowing whither he went."

II. HIS SACRIFICING HIS SON ISAAC, for no other reason than the command of God. "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac," &c. (Gen. xxii. 2-14). Now in order to estimate in some measure the might of this man's faith in executing this command, we must consider it: (1) In relation to his *affection as a father*. Isaac was peculiarly endeared to him; he was not merely his son, but his only son, and a son of promise, the son whose

birth he had anticipated with an exultant heart.

(2) In relation to the *period at which it occurred*. The severity of a trial is often enhanced by the time at which it occurs. When did this trial take place? "After these things." What things? After he had parted with Lot, interceded for Sodom, pilgrimaged in Canaan for many years, trained his much-loved son up to manhood, settled down at Beer-sheba as an old man hoping to spend the evening of life and toil at peace.

(3) In relation to the *sentiment of his age*. In the age in which he lived, it was considered not only a calamity, but a disgrace, to be without children; but how abhorrent would that man be to society who murdered his only child! The work he had to do was against the rolling tide of public sentiment. (4) In rela-

tion to his *theological creed*. That in his son "all the nations of the earth were to be blessed." This command struck at the root of this conviction. What tremendous forces opposed him in endeavouring to execute the behest of his God! Yet he did it, did it *promptly*. Without consulting wife or neighbours, or "conferring with flesh and blood," he rose early in the morning. He did it *persistently*. He did not strike the blow at once, it was not from impulse that he acted, it took him three long days. He did it *completely*. The son is laid on the altar, the knife is in his grasp, the fatal plunge is virtually given.

Here, then, is a *man of mighty faith*. It was *faith in God*, not in theories about God, faith in these tend to weaken men and make them



vacillating ; but in God Himself, the All-wise, the All-good, the All-loving. He obeyed the Word of that God, although that Word seemed to clash with the moral laws of nature, and was repugnant to the profoundest instincts and affections of his heart. This mighty faith gave him rectitude of soul. This mighty faith made him the "friend of God." This strong faith gave him a pre-eminent position, not only amongst the good of all ages and lands, but in the heavens above. "They shall come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of heaven with Abraham, with Isaac, and Jacob." "I envy no quality," says Sir Humphrey Davey, "of the mind or intellect in others, be it genius,

power, wit, or fancy, but I should prefer a firm religious faith to every other blessing, for it makes life a discipline of goodness, creates new hopes when all earthly hopes vanish, and throws over the decay and apparent destruction of existence the most gorgeous of all lights, awakens life even in death, and from corruption and decay calls up beauty and divinity, makes an instrument of torture and of shame the ladder of ascent to paradise, and far above all combinations of earthly hopes, calls up the most delightful visions of palms and amaranths, the gardens of the blest, the security of everlasting joys—where the sensualist and the sceptic view only gloom, decay, annihilation, and death."

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THE GOSPEL.—"Let mental culture go on advancing, let science go on gaining in depth and breadth, and the human intellect expand as it may ; it will never go beyond the moral culture of Christianity, as it glistens and shines forth in the Gospels."—*Goethe*.

### The Unseen Universe.

“THINGS NOT SEEN”  
Heb. xi. 1.

There are two classes of “things not seen.” (1) The *contingently* invisible, they can be seen and are seen by some, but are unseen by others, in consequence of distance, minuteness or defect in faculty and light. The other class is, (2) Those that are *essentially* unseeable, that can never come within the range of the visual faculty, such as thought, spirit, God. There is an unseen universe. It is of the latter class we speak, the essentially invisible, and concerning it we remark—

I. The seen universe is the EFFECT of the unseen. There was a time when nothing was seen, when all that existed was invisible, and He who no man hath seen or can see “spoke and it was done,

commanded and it stood fast.” All that comes within the sweep of the microscope or the mightiest telescope, or within the range of any created eye, is but the production of an invisible agent. Just as all the visible productions of mankind, all the paintings, sculpture, buildings, ships, all the towns, cities, mansions, palaces, cathedrals, cities, came out of the unseen in man—viz., his mind, his thought, his purpose, his volition, so all the material creation came out of the mind of the Invisible God.

II. The seen universe is the REVELATION of the unseen. The visible reveals the invisible. Paul says, “The things that are invisible, things of time, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the

things that are made." The *seen* reveals the wisdom, the might, the tastefulness of the unseen.

III. The seen is the INSTRUMENT of the unseen. As the body is the instrument of the mind, all material nature is the instrument of the invisible God. It is an invisible power that sustains, directs, and uses all nature.

IV. The seen is but the SHADOW of the unseen, "Things that are seen are temporal," &c. Men talk of the palpable and the tangible, that which they can touch and handle, and see with the bodily eye as the *real*, but it is not the real at all. It has no fixity, no substance, all is in constant flux and reflux, all as insubstantial as a dream. The only real and lasting thing is the invisible.

V. The unseen is REALISABLE by man as well as the seen. It is a dis-

tinguishing power of man that he can realise the invisible. Brutes, I suppose, cannot do so, everything to them which they cannot see, touch, or handle, is nothing. But man has the power to penetrate the veil and look into the region of the unseen. Upon his realising the invisible, man's progress depends. (1) His *intellectual* progress. The men who realise nothing but what they see and hear, what comes within the range of their senses can make no progress. It is because scientific men pierce the veil and see the invisible elements and forces, ascertain their methods of operation, that men rise in intelligence and civilisation. (2) His *spiritual* progress. By this I mean the progress of the entire man, his conscience, the core of his being. Let us take a few men who have realised the in-

visible. It is said of Moses that he "endured as seeing Him who is invisible," he realised that Almighty Spirit in whom all "live and move, and have their being," and he became mighty. It is said of Noah that he believed in "things not seen as yet." Peter says "Whom, having not seen, we love," &c. And Paul says, "Our citizenship is in heaven." Man can only rise spiritually as he realises the invisible, as he "walks by faith and not by sight." He who "walks by sight" is bounded by the material, matter is his cradle, his nourishment, the circle of his activities, and his grave. On the

contrary, he who "walks by faith" towers into other regions, brighter, broader, and more blest. The man whose faith is bounded by the evidences of his senses, must have but a very narrow world. With the places he has not actually seen, he will have no interest, no connexion. The stupendous systems that roll away in the boundless districts of space, and the mighty principalities of spirits that populate those systems, will be nothing to him. Nay, life, which is invisible, mind which is invisible, God who is invisible, will be nothing to him, if he believes only what he sees.

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CURIOSITY CONCERNING THE SPIRITUAL.—I have been reading some of Milton's amazing descriptions of spirits, of their manner of life, their power, their boundless liberty, and the scenes which they inhabit, and my wonted enthusiasm kindled high. I almost wished for death, and wondered with admiration what that life and those strange regions really are. I cannot wonder that this intense and sublime curiosity has sometimes demolished the corporeal prison, by flinging it from a precipice or into the sea. Milton's description of Uriel and the Sun revived, the idea which I have before indulged as an imagination of sublime luxury of committing myself to the liquid element of rising on its swells, darting upwards on the spiry point of a flame, and then falling fearless again into the fervent ocean. O, what is it to be dead! What is it to associate with resplendent angels?"—*J. Foster.*

# Seeds of Sermons on St. Paul's Epistle to Philippians.

Having gone through all the verses in the Epistle to the Ephesians (see "Homilist," Vol. xxii. to xxviii.), we proceed to develope, with our usual brevity, the precious germs of truth contained in this letter. The following remarks, as a standing introduction, may contribute some portion of light to the whole Epistle:—Notice (1) *The residence of the persons addressed.* Philippi—whose ancient name was Crenides—was a city of Macedonia, and called after the name of Philip of Macedon, because he rebuilt and fortified it. B.C. 358. and afterwards colonised by Julius Cæsar, who invested the population with the privilege of a Roman City. It was the first place in Europe where the Gospel was preached by Paul, an account of which we have in the sixteenth chapter of the Acts. It was during his second missionary tour, and about A.D. 53.—Notice (2) *The occasion of the Epistle.* The contributions which the Philippians had made towards supplying the Apostle's necessities when a prisoner at Rome, evidently prompted its production.—Notice (3) *The scene from which the Epistle was addressed.* That it was from Rome where he was a prisoner is clear, from chapters i. 1-13, iv. 22. It would seem from the Epistle that he was expecting a speedy decision of his case, and hoped to obtain his release. Epaphroditus had been despatched to him from the Philippian Church with pecuniary contributions for the Apostle's relief, and on his return the Apostle entrusted this letter for conveyance. This would be about A.D. 63.—Notice (4) *The general character of the Epistle.* It is all but free from any censure, and breathes a warm and generous feeling through every part. The Epistle gives us the impression that the Philippian Church was one of the most pure, consistent, and generous of that age. About 40 or 50 years after this Epistle was written, we are informed that Ignatius, on his way to martyrdom passed through Philippi, and was most warmly received in that city.]

## No. XI.

### SOUL SALVATION AS A WORK IN THE SOUL.

"WHEREFORE, MY BELOVED, AS YE HAVE ALWAYS OBEYED, NOT AS IN MY PRESENCE ONLY, BUT NOW MUCH MORE IN MY ABSENCE, WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING. FOR IT IS GOD WHICH WORKETH IN YOU BOTH TO WILL AND TO DO OF HIS GOOD PLEASURE." *Phil.* ii. 12, 13.

It is worthy of note that this, of all the epistles of Paul, is the only one that contains no direct rebuke. The Apostle here

speaks of them as "having always obeyed," not only in his presence, but in his absence. The passage leads us to contemplate *soul salvation as a work in the soul.* The word salvation implies a previous lost condition. The soul is lost, but in what sense? Not in the sense of *missing*, as the piece of silver was lost, the sheep was lost, the prodigal son lost; God knows where every soul is. Not in the sense of *destruction*, as the tree or house is lost when burnt to ashes,



but in the sense in which a worthless child is lost to his parents, a worthless soldier to an army, a worthless citizen to his country. All souls are lost to God in this sense, they fulfil not their mission, which is (1) truthfully to reveal, (2) loyally to obey, and (3) religiously to serve Him. I offer three remarks on this subject :—

I. Salvation is a SUPREME work IN man. The Apostle urges it here as supreme. "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed not as in my presence," &c. As if he had said, Mind, attend to this, wherever I am, in whatever condition, whether I am living or dying, do not neglect your salvation. This is the supreme work. If the soul is not restored to the knowledge, and image of the true God, what matters it what else a man may possess. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Another remark I offer is—

II. Salvation is a DIVINE work IN man. "It is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure." (1) He works *in you*. He works everywhere outside of you. He is the force of all forces, the Spirit in all the wheels of nature, but in the soul He has a higher sphere. As outside

in unreasoning nature He works in harmony with the laws which He has established, so in the soul He works according to its laws of thought and volition. (2) He works in you *for your salvation*. Not for your destruction; destruction would require no work on His part, a mere volition would extinguish you for ever, but He works to save you, works as the physician works to save his patient, as the life-boat works to save the sinking bark. (3) He works in you for your salvation "*according to His good pleasure*." It is not His will that you should perish; the desire of His great Fatherly heart is that you should be saved. Hence He works in you, works silently, constantly, and in connection with all the influences of nature, events of history, and the laws of your own soul. I offer another remark—

III. Salvation is a HUMAN work IN man. First: It is a work which the *man must do for himself*. "Work out your own salvation." No one can do the work for you; no one can believe, repent, and love for you; the work is absolutely personal. Secondly: Man's encouragement to this work is *the co-operation of God*. "God worketh in you, to will and to

do of His good pleasure." His agency, instead of superseding the necessity of yours, should stimulate yours. If He did not work with you, your efforts would be futile; if against you, your efforts would be baffled and confounded. But your salvation is His "good pleasure." He works with you as He works with the industrious agriculturist; He supplies all the necessary conditions for

success in the production of golden crops. He works with you as He works with the genuine truth-seeker, touches the springs of thought, and stimulates by ever opening prospects.

CONCLUSION:—Never let us forget that our supreme work is spiritual salvation, that all other works should be made subservient to this.

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## Homiletical Briefings.

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No. CCCLVIII.

### Moral Corruption.

"FOR WHERESOEVER THE CARCASE IS, THERE WILL THE EAGLES BE GATHERED TOGETHER."—*Matt.* xxiv. 28.

THE word "*for*" should be omitted. The word "*carcase*" I take to represent moral corruption; Calvin, who represents the "*carcase*" as the sacrificed body of Christ, and the eagles as believers flocking to Him, propounds, as he often does, sentiments most repugnant to the noblest instincts of human nature. What can be more revolting than to compare Christ to carrion, and believers to vultures, scenting afar the ill-odoured prey, and swooping down upon it with ravenous heat? But, alas, he is not the only commentator that has propounded such revolting and blasphemous thoughts, their name is legion. The word "*carcase*" here is undoubtedly employed by Christ to symbolise the *moral corruption* that is rife in the world. Here, then, we have two subjects for thought; moral corruption *in*

*revolting metaphor*, and moral corruption *attracting the retributive messengers of heaven*. I. MORAL CORRUPTION IN REVOLTING METAPHOR. It is a "carcase." In what respect is a "carcase" a symbol of a soul under the dominion of sin and wickedness? First: *Its life* is gone. That vital force that once moved those limbs, and gleamed through those eyes, is extinct. So with unregenerate souls. Supreme sympathy with the supremely good—the true life of all moral beings,—is gone. Secondly: *Appropriating force* is gone. That carcase once had the power to appropriate to its own nourishment and pleasure the fruits of the earth, the sunbeam, the vital breeze, and the refreshing stream. But now the very elements which once it could turn to its own use, hasten its dissolution, and break it into atoms. It is so with corrupt souls, the very external circumstances which in a pure state they make, subserve their use, now beat them down and crush them in the dust. Thirdly: *The power for usefulness* is gone. All animal existences have their use, and do, according to their measure, service to the great system to which they belong; but when life is gone they are *pernicious*. The carrion makes foul the atmosphere, and impregnates it with the germs of disease and death. So with human souls under the mastery of sin; they are not useful but pernicious, they are a curse to their circle and their age. "One sinner destroyeth much good." Fourthly: *The charm of comeliness* is gone. The "carcase"—be it that of bird or beast, or still more of man—had its charms in life, but when life is gone, even in the "human form divine," there is a hideousness that revolts. So of corrupt souls. Is there aught more revolting to the moral universe than unchastity, selfishness, dishonesty, untruthfulness, and irreverence? Here is,

II. MORAL CORRUPTION ATTRACTING THE RETRIBUTIVE MESSENGERS OF HEAVEN. "Wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together." The bird we call the eagle feeds not on carrion, but on living flesh; hence the vulture, which is often identified with eagles, is here referred to. These birds, sitting on the craggy rocks or hovering in the air, scent from afar the effluvia emitted from the putrid carcase, and hasten on rapid wings to the spot. One attracts the other, and a crowd gathers round the carrion, which soon devour it. Two remarks here. (1) In this they act *by a law of their nature*. In their work they act out their instincts and develop their powers. Punishment for sin is not an extraordinary infliction, but a natural effect. "Be sure your sins

will find you out." "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." (2) In this they act with *advantage to the world*. They are a kind of "Sanitary Commissioners," clearing away that which is not only useless, but offensive and poisonous as well. Retribution is beneficent, hells are benign institutions. Unquenched fires were required in the valley of Gehenna to prevent the effluvia arising from putrid bodies, spreading a fatal disease through the population of Jerusalem.

No. CCCLIX.

### The Sweet Light of Life.

"TRULY THE LIGHT IS SWEET."—*Eccles.* xi. 7.

The light of the sun is at all times sweet and pleasant. Glorious orb! His beams not only reveal, but create ten thousand forms of beauty, that lift the soul to its highest moods of thought and admiration. But there are other lights in life which are very "sweet." I. There is the "light" of an AMIABLE TEMPER. The dimpled cheeks, the sparkling eyes, the merry notes, the gushing ministries of an amiable temper are indeed "*sweet*." A countenance beaming with good nature has often dispelled the gloom of a disheartened man and carried sunshine into his heart. Some are amiable by nature, all can be amiable by cultivation. II. There is the "light" of a NOBLE CHARACTER. Christ said of His disciples, "Ye are the lights of the world," and truly he whose motives are disinterested, whose honesty is incorruptible, whose spirit and aims are Christly, is "light" indeed, a "sweet light." A light that animates, cheers, and refreshes the observer. III. There is the "light" of GOOD FELLOWSHIP. As social beings, we are wondrously influenced by the character of the circle in which we move. By good fellowship is not meant the fellowship of the wealthy, the fashionable, and the gay; the society of such generally is anything but a "sweet light." The intellect is too worldly and vain to radiate intelligence, or even to sparkle with good wit and humour. Ah me! the minds of many such fellowships have run into bloated flesh and painted butterflies. The light issuing from such is the

light of a smoking lamp. By good society is meant the society of men, the fountains of whose nature are pure, the thoughts of whose minds are fresh, true, and exhilarating, in whose conversation there flow ideas to enlighten, and humour to charm. Who that lives in, or who that ever enters such society will not say, "Truly the light is sweet?" IV. There is the "light" of REDEMPITIVE TRUTH. This is the best of all the lights. A light this that not only scatters moral darkness, and makes clear God and His universe, duty, and destiny, but quickens with the highest life all the faculties of the soul, and brings them out in harmony with the Divine will. It is what Paul calls a "marvellous light."

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No. CCCLX.

### Human Life in Retrospect.

"THE DAYS OF THE YEARS OF MY PILGRIMAGE ARE AN HUNDRED AND THIRTY YEARS: FEW AND EVIL HAVE THE DAYS OF THE YEARS OF MY LIFE BEEN."—*Gen.* xlvii. 9.

The patriarch's words are a wail over his past life. I make three remarks concerning human life in retrospect. I. It is SADDENING. The patriarch speaks of his past life as having been (1) *Unsettled*. A "pilgrimage," never settling down, always on the move, passing every day into new and strange scenes. (2) *Brief*. "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been." His life was not short as compared with the brevity of the men of the present times, it was nearly twice as long. He was now 130 years old. Life in the retrospect always appears brief. The old man will say it is only as yesterday he was a child at home, a boy at school, &c. But what matters it when life comes to an end, whether it has been short or long? The shorter perhaps the better. (3) *Evil*. Not only did Jacob feel that his days had been few, but "evil" also. Why did he call them evil? On the whole, he had a far pleasanter life than the overwhelming majority of the human race. He was a wealthy man, much respected by his circle, and received special manifestations of heavenly mercy. In the retrospect, our days, whatever enjoyments we may have had,



whatever virtues may have marked them, are “evil;” evil because they are never to be recalled, all the enjoyments vanish as a dream; evil because of the memory of their moral imperfections are more or less distressing. I remark again concerning human life in retrospect that, II. IT STANDS IN CONTRAST WITH IT IN PROSPECT. Who in starting in life feels that it will be an unsettled state, that his days will be “few and evil?” Hope makes life to the young a settled, lengthened, and joyous thing. It has a home that will afford ample rest, and its “days” will be sunny and almost without end. The contrast between the life we have in prospect, and the life in review, at its close shows us the illusions to which we were subject. Another remark I make concerning human life in retrospect is, III. IT SUGGESTS THE IDEA OF A BETTER EXISTENCE. It appears to me that underlying this wail of the old patriarch, there was an impression of a life settled, long, and blessed. This impression, methinks, was the standard by which he measured the ever changing, brief, and unblessed past. Truly, a belief in a future life is almost necessary to reconcile us to the present.

CONCLUSION:—Now at the close of another year let us take a retrospect of our past existence, and let that retrospect strengthen our faith in a life to come, and stimulate our efforts in preparation for it.

## No. CCCLXI.

### Man Blessing the Lord and the Lord Blessing Man.

“BEHOLD, BLESS YE THE LORD,” &c.—*Ps. cxxxiv.* 1-3.

The two first verses of this Psalm—which is the last of the Pilgrim Psalms or Song of Degrees—are addressed by the congregation to the priests and Levites who had charge of the temple during the night (1 Chron. ix. 27-33). The last verse seems to be the answer of the priests in dismissing the people with a blessing. I. MAN is here represented as BLESSING THE LORD. “Bless ye the Lord.” That is, praise ye the Lord. Although the priests or “servants” of the Lord are here called upon to engage in this, the sublimest of all exercises, it is the one grand duty, or rather privilege of all men of all classes, climes, and conditions. To praise

Him is to worship Him, to worship Him in spirit and in truth, to worship Him not merely with the lip but always with the *life*, in all the engagements, activities, and concerns of every day existence. II. The LORD is here represented as BLESSING MAN. "The Lord that made heaven and earth bless Thee out of Zion." This is the usual form of priestly benediction (Numbers vi. 24). It means the Lord shall bless thee out of Zion. Observe—First: The *Author* of the blessing. "The Lord that made heaven and earth." What a condescension in Him, what an honour for us! Observe—Secondly: The *condition* of the blessing. It seems to imply that He will bless us on the condition that we bless Him, or worship Him. So it ever is, there is a Divine blessing in worship. In truth, to worship Him rightly is to enjoy the highest blessings that He will confer.

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#### No. CCCLXII.

#### True Socialism.

"BEHOLD, HOW GOOD AND PLEASANT IT IS FOR BRETHREN TO DWELL TOGETHER IN UNITY, &c.—*Ps. cxxxiii. 1-3.*

The authorship of this Psalm is unknown. Perhaps its reference is to the settlement of the ark in the temple, as the central point of worship. The subject of this poem is at once obvious and beautiful: it is *genuine socialism* or unity of souls. Unity of souls is not *theological* unity, religious dogmas divide but can never unite. Not *ecclesiastical* unity; no laws made by any Church, though signed by all its members, can unite souls. Not *mechanical* unity, the unity of organisations either political, religious, or commercial. Unity of soul implies unity in the supreme affection, the supreme aim, the supreme rule. Now this sublime ode teaches that such soul unity is *good, delightful, and beneficent*. I. It is good. "Behold, how good it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Why is it good? First: Because it harmonises with *man's social constitution*. It is what man's social nature *craves* for, his greatest hunger is for loving companionship. It is what man's social nature *needs*. He needs the ministry of friendship from the cradle to the grave. It is what man's social nature *pictures* as its grandest *ideal*. Social unity is regarded by all peoples and nations as the perfection of society. It

is good: Secondly: Because it harmonises with the *teaching of the Gospel*. Christ inculcated this unity, and prayed for it, that "they all may be one." The apostles everywhere exhort to it, "be of one mind one toward another."

II. It is DELIGHTFUL. "How pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity, it is like the precious ointment," &c. (1) It is delightful to *witness*. To "behold" it in the family, the church, the nation. All jealousies, envies, rivalries, wars, banished from the scene, and utterly unknown. "Peace like morning dew distils, and all the air is love." (2) It is delightful to *experience*. "It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard." The reference is here to the good oil, the holy oil of consecration, prepared in a certain way, and for a certain purpose. With this oil Aaron was not merely sprinkled, but anointed; it was poured upon his head, and it ran gently down to his beard and his garments, and this invested his whole person and garments with the delicious aroma. What a delicious fragrance there is in social unity, to feel one with all, and all with one another, This gives to the social atmosphere a delicious perfume.


III. It is BENEFICENT. "As the dews of Hermon, *and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion.*" The words italicised in the text should be left out. It does not mean that the dew falls alike upon the two mountains, but that the moisture that gathers on Mount Hermon is caught up by the sun, and falls in refreshing showers on the distant heights of Zion. The idea is: First: That this unity is *peaceful*. How silently falls the dew! How serenely moves society where all its members are inspired with love one towards another, no clash, no jar, no grating of the wheels. The idea is: Secondly: That this unity is *refreshing*. It gives to the whole social sphere perpetual freshness, verdure, and beauty.

CONCLUSION.—I call this true socialism, divine communism. It is the union that gives "liberty, equality, and fraternity." There is no "*liberty*" in any community where brotherly love reigns not, the tree of freedom can only grow on the banks of the river of universal benevolence. There is no "*fraternity*" where there is not genuine brotherly affection, nor "*equality*" either. Were secular equality possible, without this brotherly love it would be a curse rather than a blessing. Love lifts all souls up to that sublime plain of being where all are one in Christ Jesus.

# *The Preacher's Scrap Book.*

## THE USE OF EARTH-WORMS.

"FEAR NOT, THOU WORM JACOB." *Isa. xli. 14.*

"ORMS!" The very word is repulsive; it calls up the hideous, creeping, slimy, objectionable creatures which haunt the under-world of our globe, and fills the ordinary mind with images of horror and disgust. A man is thought superhumanly humane if he refrains, like the poet Cowper, from setting his foot upon a worm. "What is the good of them?" must often have been asked, when the gardener turns up a spadeful of mould which is found full of these wriggling knots. Probably many people incline to believe that they were really created for the express purpose of being bait for anglers, and it is thought an exceptional proof of vivacity, when they are threaded on a hook, to remark "that even the worm will turn." To the horror and loathing, moreover, provoked by the unlovely appearance of the earth-worm is added a certain special dislike. This springs from the absurd and mistaken idea that the ungainly creatures have to do with the decomposition of buried corpses. People hate the obscure animal, popularly said to play undertaker to all flesh, although as a matter of fact worms seldom burrow deeper than a few inches, except to go to sleep. Suddenly, however, the gentle sunbeam of genius has shone into the dark region where these despised beings dwell and work. A great naturalist, to whose admirable instinct of inquiry nothing is "common or unclean," has brought out into full light the nature and function of earth-worms, with the result of proving that there is almost no creature to which man, as a civilised being, owes more than to this humble object. Dr. Darwin has for many years past closely studied these among other neglected denizens of our common planet, and now gives us the fruits of his investigations in a little volume bearing the title of "Vegetable Mould and Earth-worms."

At the touch of his transcendently patient intellect a new glory breaks over the degraded, writhing, offensive worm. Instead of being useless, or even harmful, it turns out that we could never do without these humble creatures. They, and they alone, in their countless millions, and by their ceaseless hidden toil, have made the globe what it is, fit for agriculture and the residence of man. The bulk of the humus or vegetable mould of his fields everywhere is mainly of their manufacture, and goes perpetually through and through their organs to be fitted and perfected for fertility. The most assiduous and wealthy farmer does not lavish half as much nourishment upon his crops as the earth-worms, which in many parts of the British Isles make and bring to the surface of each acre of land ten tons or more of rich fine mould yearly. All things considered, Dr. Darwin inclines to rank the earth-worm higher in the scale of constructive agencies than the coral insect itself, though the last-named rears islands, and ocean-kingdoms. It is the worm which, by perpetually consuming decayed leaves and small particles of soil, disintegrates and renews all the face of our earth. Their castings, hardly noticed, alter invisibly the contour of a whole country. Brought up from below, they make stones and rocks gradually sink, covering these by the collapse of their tiny burrows, so that the surface grows smooth for our use by their viewless help. Antiquarians owe to the earth-worm the preservation of almost every ancient pavement and foundation by the soft coat of mould with which they overlay these relics. They remove decaying leaves, facilitate the germination of seeds and the growth of plants, and create for us most of our wide, level, turf-covered expanses. Thus at one stroke our great natural philosopher has raised them to an honourable rank in the vast family of creation. The poor earth-worm is henceforward decorated with the blue ribbon of science. He has got his promotion after long ages of neglect. The concluding words with which the most famous of modern natural philosophers sums up this monograph are as follows: "It may be doubted whether there are many other animals which have played so important a part in the history of the world as have these lowly organised creatures." To appreciate the patience, the discernment, and the penetrating genius with which Charles Darwin has thus transformed a repulsive into an attractive topic, his new work must be reverently studied. Ever since 1837 he has quietly applied searching and persistent experiments to the habits and the



labours of earth-worms. He has, so to speak, domesticated them, with the result that he can now tell us what they do, why they do it, and how they do it. They are found almost everywhere. Their castings may be seen on the shoulder of lofty Schiehallon, in Perthshire, and on the top of the Nilgherri Mountains. Their numbers are prodigious. An average of fifty-three thousand seven hundred and sixty-seven are calculated to reside in a single acre. The earth-worm is nocturnal in its feeding and activity, and each individual is bisexual. It has a mouth and a most peculiar digestive apparatus; it breathes by the skin, but has no eyes, and is quite deaf. Slightly sensitive to light, it escapes danger by knowing and avoiding the day. Worms hide during a frost, and though insensible to atmospheric sounds or waves, they feel the vibrations of solids. They have no sense of smell, and yet display strong preference for certain food, such as cabbage and onion. Dr. Darwin pronounces them distinctly intelligent by reason of the way in which they make and line their burrows, and draw in fallen leaves to close them up. These leaves they prepare for digestion by a strange and unique alkaline secretion. Nothing can be more curious or convincing than the experiments by which Dr. Darwin made his tame worms display their mechanical intellect. He has counted many times the leaves which they drag in, observing whether it was by the foot-stalk, the tip or the middle, and he has found that the worm acts as an intelligent being would. With the specially-shaped rhododendron leaf, which is of late as new a thing to them as Sanskrit Manuscripts have been to this century, they reverse their general practice. Fir-needles, which could not be drawn in by the apex, are always seized by the base. The same method was adopted when the tips of the needles were gummed together, or fastened with fine thread. In the case, however, of the petioles of the ash-tree, the pointed extremities were drawn in first, contrary to habit, and this because that portion serves for food. It was proved by furnishing them with triangles of greased paper, that the worm chose sixty-two in a hundred times the easiest point by which to draw in the plug for its hole. Of course this might be mainly instinct, but when we see it applied to the leaves of foreign and unknown plants, and objects so peculiar, we must agree with Dr. Darwin that it looks like positive intelligence. Small as are the cerebral ganglia of the poor earth-worm, our brilliant author well reminds us that the tiny grey particle which makes the brain of a worker-ant is,

nevertheless, a mass of inherited knowledge and adaptative means. These humble creatures, then, have been proved, by their exquisitely patient methods, to perform an extraordinary amount of world-work, although their active period of toil is little more than half the year. On a down in Kent Dr. Darwin found the worms had thrown up digested soil amounting to 18 tons per acre. On the sandy soil of Leith Hill a similar investigation gave 16 tons as the annual result. These ejecta not only supply agriculture with the new vegetable earth, but, as has been said, they cover up stones and level the entire surface for traffic and use, besides helping forward immensely the breaking down of rocks and rough matter. Wherever the damp can come, the earth-worm will live and work, and Mr. Darwin shows how many Roman and ancient buildings they have preserved, both by the process of silent burial and by causing the subsidence of the structure. Our great naturalist does not hesitate to rank the worm with the glaciers, the rains, and the rivers in the task, eternally proceeding, of wearing down for the earth's service the rocks and stones. He calculates the actual weight of soil rendered serviceable for vegetable life in Great Britain alone by the worm since its appearance there at the enormous total of 329 billion tons. After these startling figures who again will despise the blind, deaf, and almost organless earth-worm, which has, nevertheless, its life of eminent utility to lead, and which probably enjoys in some darkling and unimaginable way its obscure existence ? For these lowly creatures, perhaps hitherto unregarded or disliked, there remains some reward and some higher development, for there is a sort of virtue among them. There are busy worms and lazy worms. Those which are domesticated by Dr. Darwin, having no fear of frost, became disgracefully indifferent to the duty of pulling leaves by the proper end into their burrows, and turning them into humus. Luxury, it seems, can demoralise even a lob-worm, and with this little moral we close. It is impossible to pay too warm a tribute of admiration either to the unparalleled gifts possessed by the illustrious philosopher who has made these observations, or to the unsuspected value and vast importance of creatures which hitherto seemed of almost less account than the dust wherein they dwell. (See "*Public Opinion*," Oct. 22nd, 1881.)

# Ministers Whom I have Known.

(Continued from Vol. xlviii., page 281.)

DRS. NICHOLAS, RALEIGH, AND MELLOR.



WRITE the three names at the head of this paper not only because they were about the same age, were identified with the same religious connexion, and quitted the scene of mortal life within a few months of each other, but because they were fellow students at Lancashire Independent College, maintained a friendship with one another to the last; also because they were men of marked ability. The first, DR. NICHOLAS, was a countryman of mine, and born and reared in the same county. He was in stature thick set, and inclined to obesity. His head was large, and, in later years, was stripped of nature's ornamental cover. His complexion was ruddy and clear, his features sharp, and of Shemetic type, his eyes small but piercing, his brow broad, and of a commanding character. He was of a somewhat retiring, secretive, and unassuming disposition. He preferred toiling in the study to the clap-trap work of "stumping" in public gatherings. Hence he was but little known, even to his own denomination, and passed away from the world with scarcely a record that such a man had ever lived. Yet he had lived and done some noble work. At the outset of his life he had done good pastoral service in his ministry at Stroud. For some years he was a theological tutor at the Presbyterian College, Carmarthen, and through his influence and efforts the English Independent Church in that town owes its existence. He was a literary man of no mean order. He was a contributor to the "Athenæum," and other high class serials. He did much to enrich the historical literature of his own country. His celebrated work entitled, "The Pedigree of the English People," is one whose merits have been acknowledged by the best scholars of the age, have commanded for it a large circulation, and will ensure it a lasting place in the best libraries of thinking men. By the way, on the production of this work he had to answer the charge of plagiarism in the courts of law. Mr. Osborne Morgan, to

whom he entrusted his cause, utterly failed in resisting the iniquitous charge, and judgment went against him. Conscious, however, of his own innocence, he appealed for a revocation of the judgment. He was his own counsel. He confronted his opponents in the open court, and pleaded, before one of the most learned of our judges, his own case. He won the day, reversed the previous judgment, and obtained the plaudits of the court. But perhaps his greatest work was that of establishing the University of Aberystwith, in Wales.\* Though the idea of that university originated with me, and with me only, he was the man who did the hard, practical work. Soon after I had written the first letter on the subject in the "*Cambria Daily Leader*," urging my countrymen to the enterprise, I happened to meet him, and travel with him in the same carriage for some distance, when I endeavoured, and succeeded, in inspiring him with the idea, urged him to follow up my letter by letters of his own. This he did. His letters were afterwards collected and published in the form of a pamphlet, and put into circulation. This able publication excited considerable interest. After this, I wrote to him in order to persuade him to devote his time and energies entirely to the object. He came to London, and in my own library, in his presence, I drew up two resolutions to be laid before a meeting to consider the subject. One referred to the desirability and feasibility of the scheme, and the other to the appointment of committee and secretaries. These we took to the meeting. I moved each one, both were unanimously carried. We succeeded in getting my old friend, the late Mr. S. Williams, M.P. for Lambeth (at whose political meetings in my neighbourhood I had spoken on his behalf), to preside on the occasion. He did so, and promised a contribution of £1,000. This was the origin of the University for Wales. But had it not been for the subsequent self-denying and persistent labours of Dr. Nicholas, it would have died in its birth. He canvassed every part of the country, and after years of toil collected, I think, somewhere about £20,000—anyhow, a sum that justified the purchase of a splendid edifice in Aberystwith. He continued his interest and his labours until the building was inaugurated by a public meeting, the Lord Lieutenant of the county being in the chair, and at which he, myself, and Hugh Owen spoke. His speech

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\* See "*Homilist*," Vol. xl., page 457.

was a most masterly one. Soon after this, alas, he found that he could not work in confidence and comfort with Mr. Hugh Owen and another on the council, and he withdrew.

I record all this in justice to his memory. Now the institution is established, and in all probability will be handsomely endowed by the Government, other men claim the honour of the work. One, I think, has been knighted for it, and others, in their political addresses to my countrymen, claim much of the credit.

Dr. Nicholas, during the last few years, lived in the neighbourhood of Kensington. He lived alone, he had neither wife nor relation with him. He often used to come and dine with me, with his friend Dr. Samuel Davidson, the renowned Biblical scholar. His illness was sudden and short, lasting only a few days. No sooner did I hear of it than I hastened to see him. I found him alone on his bed, and even the servant of the house in which he was lodging was so engrossed with other business that she could scarcely attend upon him. I urged him to allow me to send another doctor, but this he refused, having great faith in his medical attendant.

About two days after this he was a corpse. One of his fellow-students, the Rev. Mr. Macbeth, of Hammersmith, with a noble generosity, undertook the charge of his funeral, which took place in Hammersmith Cemetery. Mr. Macbeth conducted the service. The Rev. Mr. Roberts, Dr. Raleigh, the Rev. Mr. Gwyn and myself, were, I think, all that were present. Thus closed the earthly career of a man worth knowing, distinguished by great attainments, and who rendered the highest service not only to his age but to posterity.\*

Though my personal acquaintance with Dr. RALEIGH was somewhat limited, I should scarcely feel justified in omitting his name in these papers. We exchanged pulpits once or twice. I heard him preach twice or thrice; on one occasion at the anniversary of Cheshunt College, when at the banquet I had the pleasure of moving a vote of thanks to him for his admirable discourse. The last time I saw him was at the grave of our mutual friend, Dr. Nicholas. We walked a little way together and talked freely, and I remember that he complained of the work of which the organisation of his denomination imposed upon him. He seemed to me, on that occasion, to be in bad health, sad, and depressed. His

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\* See "Homilist," Vol. xliv., p. 404.



physique was fragile, but his presence was not a little imposing. He was about the average height, and though his head was not large, his thick white locks gave him a venerable appearance, and calm, deep, thought sat upon his brow. As a preacher he was far above the average. If not distinguished by striking originality and far-reaching thought, his sermons were always devoutly meditative, and thrillingly interesting. His manner was grave, his elocution perfect, and his voice admirably suited to convey the loftiest ideas and sublimest sentences into the deepest depths of the soul. As a religious author, too, he took no mean position. I have read with interest his "*Quiet Resting Places*," and his work on *Jonah*, as well as some of his contributions to monthly serials. His diction was elegant, and his phrases ever musical. He attained to great popularity in his denomination, and his popularity was that in which the most thoughtful men could rejoice. It was not won by hooting orthodox platitudes, roaring paradoxes, or screaming out the horrors of damnation. He will long live in the grateful memory of those who were favoured to attend his ministry or read his books.

DR. MELLOR, who has just passed away, to the profound regret of all who knew him, I knew tolerably well, and greatly respected. He first introduced himself to me some thirty years ago or more, in a way that I shall not soon forget. It was at the Ordination of the late Rev. W. Betts, Hanover Chapel, Peckham, the successor to Dr. Collyer, a man whose pulpit popularity, some sixty years ago, was almost without parallel. On this occasion, the Rev. Thomas Binney preached, and after the morning service there was a public dinner, at which there was a large gathering of London ministers. After dinner, a fine, well structured, open-faced young man came up to me and said, "I have been told that the author of the '*Crisis of Being*,' is present. I have looked round on all the ministers here, and asked myself the question, 'Who of them all is the most likely to be the author,' and I have fastened on you. May I ask, are you the author?" Of course I did not deny it. After this, we frequently met. He contributed to the "*Homilist*," wrote me several encouraging notes as the editor. He not only was a monthly subscriber to it from the beginning, but was one of its most enlightened and appreciative friends. The last time I met him was last May twelvemonth, coming out of the Memorial Hall, when he pressed me to dine with him. On that occasion we had much free

genial chat, on a variety of topics, in which we were mutually interested. He was a most interesting companion. I remember a few years ago spending some time with him at Ben Rhyding. He was full of hilarity, playing quoits in the grounds, detailing striking anecdotes, and often giving utterance to lofty thoughts. When the thickening shadows of the night compelled us to leave the ground, and to retire to the hall of the splendid mansion, he, for the entertainment of the numerous guests, extemporised a concert, became the conductor, and with his clarion voice sang several classic songs, much to the delight of all. On the whole, I regard him as the ablest man of the denomination to which he belonged. By nature he was endowed with a singularly powerful mind, and this mind was well trained for high work, and enriched with vast and varied information. He was a splendid reasoner. In a discussion which went on a few years ago, on the "Atonement," with a somewhat popular London minister, in the "Independent" newspaper; with what masterly power and ease he crushed his argumentative antagonist. Nor was he less distinguished as a rhetorician. As an orator, though, he did not court the cheers, he commanded the reverent attention of his audience. His appearance on the denominational platform was always welcome, his presence was an ornament to it, and his speeches relieved it of its characteristic dulness. Though I deeply lament his departure, I encourage the hope of meeting him and other kindred spirits that I have known and loved in higher realms. Among the very few stars in the firmament of his denomination he was undoubtedly the brightest.

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Know we not our dead are looking,  
Downward as in sad surprise,  
All our strife of words rebuking  
With their mild and earnest eyes.  
Shall we grieve the holy angels?  
Shall we cloud their blessed skies?

Let us draw their mantles o'er us  
Which have fallen in our way;  
Let us do the work before us  
Calmly, bravely, while we may,  
'Ere the long night-silence cometh,  
And with us it is not day."

*J. G. Whittier.*

## *Literary Notices.*

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[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books, it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

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### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

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THE GIRL'S OWN ANNUAL FOR 1881. Vol. II. London: The Religious Tract Society, 56, Paternoster Row.

The second volume is in every way worthy of the first. It has immense attractions for girls, abounding with most useful information on almost every conceivable subject. It is also crowded with anecdotes, many of them of thrilling interest; and well told stories of course it has, suited to the girl's mind, nothing purient, but most with a pious tendency. Girls are supposed to be inquisitive, and questions innumerable start to them which they cannot answer themselves, these are here answered, anyhow, as many of them as deserve replies. It has some able contributors, and not a few distinguished artists, hence the pages are adorned with woodcuts, many of them striking and illustrative. We recommend all parents who have girls to subscribe to this journal.

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THE BOY'S OWN ANNUAL FOR 1881. Vol. III. Religious Tract Society: Paternoster Row.

All that we have said about "The Girl's Own Paper," will apply to this work. This, however, has the immense advantage of contributions from that most learned and distinguished naturalist, Rev. J. G. Wood. His articles alone give the book a priceless worth. The illustrations here are, we think, better than in the Girl's Own Paper; many of them withal are coloured. If we have any objection to urge it is to the assumed rightness of war. It has too many tales and stories that seem to minister to the belligerent and bloody tendencies of human nature. Of course boys like to read these things, but their effect is to brutalise the young mind. It has been said that pugnacity is an element in human nature. Granted, but the aim of all true Christian teaching should be to give a right

Christian direction to this instinct ; to set it a fighting not against life, but against lies ; not against existence, but against the physical and moral evils that curse existence. Boys do not want to have pictures of men with swords and guns and military costume, but pictures of great moral heroes. In fact, we feel in duty bound to protest against introducing so much of this kind of thing in books, professing rightly to educate our boys.

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THE QUIVER FOR 1880. Vol. XVI. London : Cassell, Petter, and Galpin, Ludgate Hill.

This serial not only holds on its way, but seems to wax stronger. It is too well known now to require us to characterise it, and too extensively appreciated to require a word of commendation. The sermons and religious discourses are what we least appreciate. With a few exceptions, they are rather conventionally evangelical, presenting to men the distorted Christ of the creeds, rather than the all-beautiful Christ of the gospels. There are many good tales in this book, two of which we have read with great interest, "Borne Back," and the "Sailor's Daughter." We have two faults, however, to find with this volume. The Index is most incomplete, and the binding is very imperfect, the leaves fall out as you read.

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THE CLERGY LIST FOR 1881. London : John Hall, 38, Parliament Street.

This is the "Clergy List" for this year. It contains a list not only of all the clergymen in England, Wales and Scotland, but also in the Colonies. Also a list of benefices, with their post towns, net value, patrons, &c. Of course this volume is not only almost a necessity for all clergymen, but for all public men.

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THE PROVINCIAL LETTERS OF PASCAL. Edited by JOHN DE SOYES. Cambridge : Deighton, Bell & Co.

It is somewhat strange that confessedly the greatest of French prose works has never yet been satisfactorily edited. The "Provincial Letters" have been so often reprinted, that the bibliographer loses all count of editions. The present edition attempts two objects. "In the first place to furnish students of French literature with an accurate text, supplemented with necessary historical notes. In the second place, to offer theological students the materials for thoroughly investigating one of the most important

pages in ecclesiastical history. It is hoped that the arrangement of the volume will prevent any confusion in the attempt to combine these objects. The Introduction contains special essays upon the great controversies upon Free-will and Casuistry, without some previous knowledge of which it is impossible to follow Pascal's polemics." The editor has done good service in the production of this valuable work.

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THE STRAIT GATE AND OTHER DISCOURSES, WITH A LECTURE ON THOMAS CARLYLE. By a SCOTCH PREACHER. Edinburgh: Andrew Elliot.

This volume consists of six discourses, the subjects of which are—The Strait Gate; The True Life of Man; Christianity in its Personal Centre and Spiritual Root; Faith, its Nature, Root, Range, and Reference; the Spirit; Unconsciousness of Self; the Spirit of Christ. Also a lengthened Preface, and a Lecture on Thomas Carlyle, his life and writings. We are sorry the author has not given his name. If he has withheld it from fear that he will be condemned on account of his heterodoxy, we have no respect for him. The time has come when every man who has the power of thinking like unto him, and whose thoughts run not on the old lines of a conventional evangelism, should show himself. The truest men of all communions would like to see, greet, and shake hands with him. For our own part we should much like to see the author of this book. Although we do not endorse all that the volume contains (and we should have little respect for the man who would endorse all that we have written), we highly recommend these discourses.

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MELANCHOLY ANATOMISED. By R. BURTON. May Fair Edition. London: Chatto and Windus, Piccadilly.

The author of this work was born in Lindley, in Leicestershire, in February, 1578, studied at Christ Church, Oxford, became rector of Seagrave, in Leicester, and continued to reside in his college at Oxford, where he wrote this work. Though he seemed to be endowed with an unusual amount of high spirit, which often filled him with fun and frolic, he was subject, as is often the case, to subjects of great depression. When these fits were on him, we are told he used to go down to the river near Oxford, and listen to the coarse jests and ribaldry of the bargemen which would often excite



him to roars of laughter. Such reliefs were, however, transient, and he betook himself to the study of the anatomy of melancholy, and this book is the result, a work which displays immense erudition, abounds with quotations from Latin and Greek authors, sparkles in every page with wit and humour, and made a fortune for its first publisher. It is said that Dr. Johnson declared that it was the only book that ever took him out of bed two hours sooner than he wished to rise. All this will stimulate our readers to become possessed of this cheap edition of the work.

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MOODS. Glasgow: J. Maclehose, St. Vincent Street, Glasgow.

Here are one hundred and twenty-three short poems on mental moods. All of them are good, rising above the average of modern poetic composition, others we are disposed to put in the highest rank. They display a fine creative imagination, and glow with a true poetic fire.

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THE LAST SUPPER OF OUR LORD. By J. M. LANG, D.D. Edinburgh: Macniven and Wallace.

This work contains some nineteen discourses in connection with the Last Supper of our Lord. The subjects are—The Farewell to the World, The Supper, Preparations, First Words, The Washing of the Feet, The Betrayer, The Word of Relief, The Bread and the Cup, the Lord's Supper in His Church, The Table-talk, The Beginning of the Discourse, An Interruption, The Request of Philip, The Greater Works, The Son's Prayer and the Father's Gift, and a Farewell Greeting, The Vine and the Branches, Conflict and Help, Sorrow turned into Joy, The Intercessory Prayer. The discourses are enlightened, thoughtful, and comforting.

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THE TEACHING OF THE BIBLE RESPECTING THE WAY OF OBTAINING ETERNAL LIFE. By Rev. JOHN VENN, M.A. London: Elliot Stock, Paternoster Row.

We must confess that this volume, though it contains a great deal that is good, does not much interest us. The theology is nearly worn out, and that because it was never in strict accord with the moral intuitions of the soul, but because the best Biblical criticisms of the day have shown that it is not in accord with the character and teaching of Christ.





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